FIFTY AMAZING SECRET SERVICE DRAMAS

There was a flash and the explosion of a heavy automatic rang out, and the familiar sound had a bracing effect on my nerves. I fired swiftly without taking aim and followed in pursuit.

(*See page* 479)

FIFTY AMAZING SECRET SERVICE DRAMAS

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THE TIMES OF INDIA
"FAMOUS FIFTY" SERIES

THE TIMES OF INDIA
BOMBAY AND CALCUTTA

ILLUSTRATIONS

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HOW I BECAME A SECRET AGENT

By

DR. A. K. GRAVES

HALF-PAST three was heard booming from some clock tower on June 12, 1913, when Mr. King, the Liberal representative from Somerset, was given the floor in the House of Commons. Mr. King proceeded to make a sensation.

He demanded that McKinnon Wood, the Secretary for Scotland, reveal to the House the secrets of the strange case of Armgaard Karl Graves, German spy.

A brief word of explanation may be necessary. Supposed to be serving a political sentence in a Scotch prison, I had amazed the English press and people by publicly announcing my presence in New York City.

Mr. King asked if I was still undergoing imprisonment for espionage; if not, when and why I was released and whether I had been or would be deported at the end of my term of imprisonment as an undesirable alien.

Permit me to quote verbatim from the Edinburgh *Scotsman*, June 12, 1913:

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND replied: Graves was released in December last. It would not be in accordance with precedent to state reasons for the exercise of the prerogative. I have no official knowledge of his nationality. The sentence did not include any recommendation in favour of deportation.

MR. KING: Was he released because of the state of his health?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND: I believe he was in bad health, but I cannot give any other answer.

MR. KING: Were any conditions imposed at the time of his release?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND: I think I have dealt with that in my answer. (Cries of "No.")

MR. KING: Can the right hon. gentleman be a little more explicit? (Laughter.) We are anxious to have the truth. Unless the right hon. gentleman can give me an explicit answer as to whether any conditions were imposed I will put down the question again. (Laughter.)

The SPEAKER intervened at this stage, and the subject dropped

Heckling began at this point; word was quickly sent to the Speaker, and he intervened, ruling the subject closed.

Now consider the Secretary for Scotland's statement. "It would not be in accordance with precedent to state reasons for the exercise of prerogative." In other words, high officials in England had found it advisable secretly to release me from Barlinnie Prison by using the Royal prerogative. Why? Later you will know.

Also, consider the Secretary of Scotland's statement that he had no official knowledge as to my *nationality*—significant that, as you will realise.

There are three things which do not concern the reader: My origin, nationality, and morals. There are three persons alive who know who I am. One of the three is the greatest ruler in the world. None of the three, for reasons of his own, is likely to reveal my identity.

I detest sensationalism, and wish it clearly understood that this is no studied attempt to create mystery. There is a certain dead line which no one can cross with immunity and none but a fool would attempt to. Powerful governments have found it advisable to keep silence regarding my antecedents. A case in point occurred when McKinnon Wood, Secretary for Scotland, refused in the House of Commons to give any information whatsoever about me, this after pressure had been brought to bear on him by three members of Parliament. Either the Home Secretary knew nothing about my antecedents, or his trained discretion counselled silence.

I was brought up in the traditions of a house actively engaged in the affairs of its country for hundreds of years. As an only son, I was promptly and efficiently spoiled for anything else but the station in life which should have been mine—but never has been and, now, never can be. I used to have high aspirations, but promises never kept shattered most of my ideals. The hard knocks of life have made me a fatalist, so now I shrug my shoulders. "*Che sara sara.*" I have had to lead my own life and, all considered, I have enjoyed it. I have crowded into thirty-nine years more sensations than fall to the lot of the average half a dozen men.

Following the custom of our house, I was trained as a military cadet. This military apprenticeship was followed by three years at a famous *gymnasium*, which fitted me for one of the old classic universities of Europe. And after spending six semesters there, I took my degree in philosophy and medicine.

Not a bad achievement, I take it, for a young chap before reaching his twenty-second birthday. I have always been fond of study, and had a special aptitude for sciences and the languages. On one occasion I acquired a fair knowledge of Singalese and Tamil in three months.

From the university I returned home. I had always been obstinate and wilful, not to say pig-headed, and being steeped in tales of wrongs done to my house and country, and with the crass assurance of a young sprig fresh from untrammelled university life, I began to give vent to utterances that were not at all to the liking of the powers that were. Soon making myself objectionable, paying no heed to their protests, and one thing leading to another, my family found it advisable to send me into utter and complete oblivion. To them I am dead, and all said and done, I would rather have it so.

After the complete rupture of my home ties, I began some desultory globe trotting. I knocked about in out-of-the-way corners, where I observed and absorbed all sorts of things which became very useful in my subsequent career. A native, and by that I mean an inhabitant, of non-European countries always fascinated me, and I soon learned the way of disarming their suspicion and winning their confidence—a proceeding very difficult to a European. After a time I found myself in Australia and New Zealand, where I travelled extensively, and came to like both countries thoroughly. I have never been in the western part of the United States, but from what I have heard and read I imagine that the life there more closely resembles the clean, healthy, outdoor life of the Australians than any other locality.

I was just on the point of beginning extensive travels in the South Sea Islands, when the situation in South Africa became ominous. War seemed imminent, and following my usual bent of sticking my nose in where I was not wanted I made tracks for this potential seat of trouble. I caught the first steamer for Cape Town, landing there a month before the outbreak of war. On horseback I made my way in easy stages up to the Rand. Here happened one of those incidents, which, although small in itself, alters the course of one's life. What took place when I rode into a small town on the Rand known as Doorn Kloof one chilly misty morning, was written in the bowl of fate.

Doorn Kloof is well named ; it means " the hoof of the Devil." A straggling collection of corrugated iron shanties set in the middle of a greyish sandy plain as barren of vegetation as the shores of the Dead Sea, sweltering hot an hour after sunrise, chilly cold an hour after sunset, populated by

about four hundred Boers of the old, narrow-minded ultra-Dutch type with as much imagination as a grasshopper—that is Doorn Kloof.

When I rode into the village I was in a decidedly bad temper. Hungry, wet to the skin, the dismal aspect of the place, the absence of anything resembling a hotel, the incivility of the inhabitants, all contributed to shorten my by no means long temper. I was ripe for a row. As I rode down the solitary street, I found a big burly *Dopper* flogging brutally a half-grown native boy. This humanitarian had the usual Boer view that the sjambok is more effective than the Bible as a civilising medium. After convincing him of the technical error of his method, I attended to the black boy, whose back was as raw as a beefsteak. Kim completely adopted me and he is with me still. I christened him Kim, after Kipling's hero, for his Basuto name is unpronounceable. He has repaid me often for what he considers the saving of his life. Not many months later Kim was the unconscious cause of a radical change in my destiny. I have ceased to wonder at such things.

By the time Kim had learned some of the duties of a body servant we had reached Port Natal. War had broken out and I volunteered with a Natal field force in a medical capacity. Field hospital work took me where the fighting was thickest. During the battle of the Modder River among the first of the wounded brought in was one of the many foreign officers fighting on the Boer side. It was Kim who found him. This officer's wound was fairly serious and necessitated close attention. Through chance remarks dropped here and there, the officer placed my identity correctly. It developed that he was Major Freiherr von Reitzenstein, one of the few who knew the real reasons of my exile.

In one of our innumerable chats that grew out of our growing intimacy, he suggested my entering the service of Germany in a political capacity. He urged that with my training and social connections I had exceptional equipment for such work. Moreover, he suggested that my service on political missions would give me the knowledge and influence necessary to checkmate the intriguers who were keeping me from my own. This was the compelling reason that made me ultimately accept his proposal to become a Secret Agent of Germany. No doubt, if the Count had lived, I would have gained my ends through his guidance and influence, but he was killed in a riding race, three years after our meeting in the Veldt, and I lost my best friend. By that time I was too deep in the Secret Service to pull out, although it was my

intention more than once to do so. And certain promises regarding my restoration in our house were never kept.

Coming to a partial understanding with Count Reitzenstein, I began to work in his interests. The Boer War taught Germany many things about the English army and a few of these I contributed. As a physician I was allowed to go almost anywhere and no questions asked. I began to collect little inside scraps of information regarding the discipline, spirit, and equipment of the British troops. I observed that many Colonial officers were outspoken in their criticisms. All these points I reported in full to Count Reitzenstein when I dressed his wound. One day he said :

" Don't forget now. After the war, I want to see you in Berlin."

In my subsequent eagerness to pump more details from the Colonial officers, I, too, criticised, and one day I was told Lord Kitchener wanted to see me.

" Doctor," he said curtly, when I was ushered into his tent, " you have twenty-four hours in which to leave camp——"

Whether that mandate was a result of my joining in with the Colonial officers' criticism, or because my secret activity for Count Reitzenstein had been suspected, I cannot say. But knowing the ways of the " man of Khartoum," I made haste to be out of camp within the time prescribed.

Later I learned that the Count, being convalescent and paroled, was sent down to Cape Town. After the occupation of Pretoria, I got tired of roughing it and made my way back to Europe, finally locating in Berlin for a prolonged stay. I knew Berlin, and had a fondness for it, having spent part of my youth there in the course of my education. It has always been a habit of mine not to seem anxious about anything, so I spent several weeks idling around Berlin before looking up Count Reitzenstein. One day I called at his residence, Thiergartenstrasse 23. I found the Count on the point of leaving for the races at Hoppegarten. He was one of the crack sportsmen of Prussia and never missed a meeting. He suggested that I go to the track with him, and while we waited for the servant to bring around his turn-out, he renewed his proposals about my entering Prussian service.

" I expected you long ago," he said. " I have smoothed your way to a great extent. We are likely to meet one or two of the Service Chiefs out at the track, this afternoon. If you like, I'll introduce you to them."

" Is there any likelihood of my being recognised ? " I asked. " You know, Count, it will be impossible for me to go under my true flag."

He assured me there was not the slightest chance.

"Your identity," he explained, "need be known to but one person."

Later I was to know who this important personage was.

"Very well," I agreed; "we'll try it."

The Count always drove his own turn-out, and invited me to climb up on the box. When his attention was not occupied with his reins and returning the salutes of passers-by, for he was one of the most popular men in Berlin, we discussed my private affairs. The Count showed a keen interest and sympathy in them and his proposal began to take favourable shape in my mind. As he predicted, we met some of the Service Chiefs at the track. Indeed, almost the first persons who saluted him in the saddle paddock were Captain Zur See von Tappken and a gentleman who was introduced to me as Herr von Reichter. The Count introduced me as Dr. von Graver, which I subsequently altered whenever the occasion arose to the English Graves. After chatting a bit, Captain von Tappken made an appointment with me at his bureau in the Koenigergratzerstrasse 70, the headquarters of the Intelligence Department of the Imperial Navy in Berlin, but made no further reference to the subject that afternoon. I noticed though that Herr von Riechter put some pointed and leading questions to me, regarding my travels, linguistic attainments, and general knowledge. He must have been satisfied, for I saw some significant glances pass between him and the Captain. The repeated exclamations of "Grossartig!" and "Colossal!" seemed to express his entire satisfaction.

Following my usual bent, I did not call at Koenigergratzerstrasse 70 as the Captain suggested. About three days passed and then I received a very courteously worded letter requesting me to call at my earliest convenience at his quarters as he had something of importance to tell me.

Koenigergratzerstrasse 70 is a typical Prussian building of administration. Solid but unpretentious, it is the very embodiment of Prussian efficiency, and like all official buildings in Germany is well guarded. The doorkeeper and commissionaire, a taciturn non-commissioned officer, takes your name and whom you wish to see. He enters these later in a book then telephones to the person required and you are either ushered up or denied admittance. When sent up, you are invariably accompanied by an orderly—it does not matter how well you are known—who does not leave you until the door has closed behind you. When you leave, there is the same procedure and the very duration of your visit is entered and checked in the doorkeeper's book.

I was admitted immediately. After passing through three anterooms containing private secretaries not in uniform, I was shown into Captain von Tappken's private office. He wore the undress ranking uniform of the Imperial Navy. This is significant, for it is characteristic of all the branches of the Prussian Service to find officers in charge. The secretaries and men of all work, however, are civilians ; this for a reason. The heads of all departments are German officers, recruited from the old feudal aristocracy, loyal to a degree to the throne. They find it incompatible, notwithstanding their loyalty, to soil their hands with some of the work connected with all government duties, especially those of the Secret Service. Though planning the work, they never execute it. To be sure, there are ex-officers connected with the Secret Service, men like von Zenden, formerly an officer of the Zweiter Garde Dragoner, but with some few exceptions they are usually men who have gone to smash. No active or commissioned officer does Secret Service work.

Von Tappken greeted me very tactfully. This is another typical asset of a Prussian Service officer, especially a naval man, and is quite contrary to the usual characteristics of English officials, whose brusqueness is too well and unpleasantly known.

After offering me a chair and cigars, Captain von Tappken began chatting.

" Well, Doctor," he said, " have you made up your mind to enter our Service ? For a man fond of travelling and adventure, I promise you will find it tremendously interesting. I have carefully considered your equipment and experience and find that they will be of mutual benefit."

I asked him to explain what would be required of me, but he replied :

" Before my entering upon that, are you averse to telling me if you have made up your mind to enter the Service ? "

It was a fair question, and I replied :

" Yes, provided nothing will be directly required of me that is against all ethics."

I noticed a peculiar smile crossing his features. Then, looking me straight between the eyes and using the sharp, incisive language of a German official, he declared :

" We make use of the same weapons that are used against us. We cannot afford to be squeamish. The interests at stake are too vast to let personal ethical questions stand in the way. What would be required of you in the first instance, is to gain for us information such as we seek. The means by which you gain this information will be left to your own discretion.

We expect results. We place our previous knowledge on the subject required, at your disposal. You will have our organisation to assist you, but you must understand that we cannot and will not be able to extricate you from any trouble in which you may become involved. Be pleased to understand this clearly. This service is dangerous, and no official assistance or help could be given under any circumstances."

To my cost, I later found this to be the truth. So far, so good. Captain von Tappken had neglected to mention financial inducements and I put the question to him.

He replied promptly :

" That depends entirely on the service performed. In the first instance you will receive a retaining fee of 4,000 marks a year. You will be allowed 10 marks a day for living expenses, whether in active service or not. For each individual piece of work undertaken you will receive a bonus the amount of which will vary with the importance of the mission. Living expenses accruing while out of work must not exceed 40 marks a day. The amount of the bonus you are to receive for a mission will in each case be determined in advance. There is one other thing. One-third of all moneys accruing to you will be kept in trust for you at the rate of 5 per cent. interest." I laughed and said :

" Well, Captain, I can take care of my own money."

He permitted the shadow of a smile to play around his mouth.

" You may be able to," he said, " but most of our agents cannot. We have this policy for two reasons : In the first place, it gives us a definite hold upon our men. Secondly, we have found that unless we save some money for our agents, they never save any for themselves. In the event of anything happening to an agent who leaves a family or other relatives, the money is handed over to them."

I later cursed that rule, for when I was captured in England there were 30,000 marks due me at the Wilhelmstrasse and I can whistle for it now.

Captain von Tappken looked at me inquiringly, but I hesitated. It was not on account of monetary causes, but for peculiarly private reasons—the dilemma of one of our house becoming a spy. The Captain, unaware of the personal equation that was obsessing me before giving my word, evidently thought that his financial inducements were not alluring enough.

" Of course," he continued, " this scale of pay in only the beginning. As your use to us and the importance of your

missions increases, so will your remuneration. That depends entirely on you."

He raised his eyebrows inquiringly.

"Very well," I said. "I accept."

He held out his hand. "You made up your mind quickly."

"It is my way, Captain, I take a thing or leave it."

"That's what I like, Doctor ; a quick, decisive mind."

That seemed to please him.

"Very well. To be of use to us, you will need a lot of technical coaching. Are you ready to start to-morrow ?"

"Now, Captain."

"Very good," he said, "but to-morrow will do. Be here at 10 a.m. Then give us daily as much of your time as we require.'

He called in one of his secretaries, gave him a command briefly and in a few minutes the man was back with an order for three hundred marks.

"This, Doctor, is your first month's living expenses. Retaining fees are paid quarterly."

As I pocketed the cheque I remarked :

"Captain, personally we are total strangers. How is it that you seem so satisfied with me ?"

Again his peculiar smile was noticeable.

"That is outside our usual business procedure," he said. "I have my instructions from above and I simply act on them."

I was young then, and curious, so I asked :

"Who are those above and what are their instructions ?"

No sooner had I put that question than I learned my first lesson in the Secret Service. All traces of genial friendliness vanished from von Tappken's face. It was stern and serious.

"My boy," he said slowly, "learn this from the start and learn it well. Do not ask questions. Do not talk. Think ! You will soon learn that there are many unwritten laws attached to this Service."

I never forgot that : It was my first lesson in Secret Service.

II

THE average man or woman has only a hazy idea what European Secret Service and Espionage really means and accomplishes. Short stories and novels, written in a background of diplomacy and secret agents, have given the public vague impressions about the world of spies. But this is the first real, unvarnished account of the system ; the class of

men and women employed; the means used to obtain the desired results and the risks run by those connected with this service. Since the days of Moses, who employed spies in Canaan, to Napoleon Bonaparte, who inaugurated the first thorough system of political espionage, potentates, powerful ministers and heads of departments have found it necessary to obtain early and correct information other than through the usual official channels. To gain this knowledge they have to employ persons unknown and unrecognised in official circles. A recognised official such as an ambassador or a secretary of legation, envoys plenipotentiary and consuls, would not be able to gain the information sought, as naturally everybody is on their guard against them. Moreover, official etiquette prevents an ambassador or consul from acting in such a capacity.

In this age of rapid developments the need of quick and accurate information is even more pressing. Europe to-day is a sort of armed camp, composed of a number of nations of fairly equal strength, in which the units are more or less afraid of each other. Mutual distrust and conflicting interests compel Germany, England, France, and Russia to spend billions of money each year on armaments. Germany builds one battleship; England lays down two; France adds ten battalions to her army; Germany adds twenty. So the relative strength keeps on a fair level. But with rapid constructions, new inventions of weapons, armour, aerial craft, this apparent equality is constantly disturbed. Here also enters the personal policy and ambitions and pet schemes of the individual heads of nations and their cabinets. Because there is a constant fear of being outdistanced, every government in Europe is trying its utmost to get ahead of the other. They, hence, keep a stringent watch on each other's movements. This is possible only by an efficient system of espionage, by trained men and women, willing to run the risks attached to this sort of work.

For risks there are. I have been imprisoned twice, once in the Balkans at Belgrade, once in England. I have been attacked five times and bear the marks of the wounds to this day. Escapes I have had by the dozen. All my missions were not successes, more often, failures, and the failures are often fatal. For instance:

Early in the morning of June 11, 1903, the plot which had been brewing in Servia ended with the assassination of the king, queen, ministers and members of the royal household of Servia. I shall not go into the undercurrent political significance of these atrocities as I had no active part in them, but

I was sent down by my government later to ascertain as far as possible the prime movers in the intrigue whch pointed to Colonel Mashin and a gang of officers of the Sixth Regiment. All these regicides received Russian pay, for King Alexander had become dangerous to Russia, because of his flirting with Austria. Besides, his own idiotic behaviour and the flagrant indiscretions of Queen Draga had by no means endeared him to his people.

I stuck my nose into a regular hornet's nest and soon found myself in a most dangerous position. I was arrested by the provisional government on the order of Lieutenant-Colonel Niglitsch on a most flimsy charge of travelling with false passports. In those times arrests and executions were the order of the day. The old Servian proverb of "*Od Roba Ikad Iz Groba Nikad*" (Out of prison, yes ; out of the grave, never) was fully acted upon. There were really no incriminating papers of any description upon me, but my being seen and associating with persons opposed to the provisional government was quite enough to place me before a drumhead court-martial.

I was sitting in the Café Petit Parisian with Lieutenant Nikolevitch and M. Krastov, a merchant of Belgrade, when a file of soldiers in charge of an officer pulled us out of our chairs and without any further ado marched us to the Citadel. The next morning we were taken separately into a small room where three men in the uniform of colonels were seated at a small iron table. No questions were asked.

"You are found guilty of associating with revolutionary persons. You were found possessing a passport not your own. You are sentenced to be shot at sundown."

The whole thing appeared to me at first as a joke, then as a bluff, but looking closely into those high-cheekboned, narrow-eyed faces with the characteristically close-cropped, brutal heads, the humorous aspect dwindled rapidly and I thought it about time to make a counter move. Without betraying any of my inward qualms—and believe me, I began to have some —I said quietly :

"I think you will find it advisable to inform M. Zolarevitch" (then Minister of War) "that Count Weringrode sends his regards."

I saw them looking rather curiously at each other and then the centre inquisitor fired a lot of questions at me, in answer to which I only shrugged my shoulders.

"That's all I have to say, monsieur."

I was shoved back in my cell. About four that afternoon one of the officers came to see me.

"Your message has not been sent. My comrades were against sending it, but I am related to Zolarevitch. So if you can show me some reason, I shall take your message."

I gave him some reason. So much so that he did not lose any time in getting under way. In fact, it was a very pale, perturbed officer who rushed out of my cell. I didn't worry much, but when at about 7.30 the cell door opened and two sentries with fixed bayonets and cartridge pouches entered, placed me in the centre and marched me into the courtyard, where ten more likewise equipped soldiers in charge of an officer awaited me, I felt somewhat green. I know a firing squad when I see one. I knew if my message ever reached responsible quarters, nothing could happen to me; but these were motley times and all sorts of delays might have happened to the officer.

"Right about wheel," and myself in the centre, we marched out of the courtyard to a little hill to the west of the Citadel.

An old stone building—probably a decayed monastery, for I noticed several crumbled tombstones—was evidently selected for the place of execution. On a little rough four-foot stone wall we halted, and the officer, pulling out a document, began reading to me a rather lengthy preamble in Servian.

Up to then not a word had been spoken. I let him finish and then politely requested him, as I was not a Serb and consequently did not understand his lingo, to translate it into a civilised language, preferably German or French. He seemed somewhat startled and gave me to understand that he was led to believe I was a Serb. I used some very forcible German and French, both of which he was able to understand, pointing out to him that some one, somewhere, had made a thundering big blunder which somehow would have to be paid for. He was clearly ill at ease, but said, "I have to obey instructions." I had told him of my message to the minister, and although it was quite obvious I was sparring for time he seemed in no way inclined to rush the execution. Five minutes went; ten minutes went and looking at his watch, which showed five minutes to eight (although it was fast getting dusk, I could see that watch-dial distinctly), shrugging his shoulders and saying: "I can delay no longer," he called a sergeant, who placed me with my shoulders to the wall and offered me a handkerchief. I didn't want a handkerchief. A few sharp orders and twelve Mauser tubes pointed their ugly black snouts directly at me.

I hate to tell my sensation just then. Frankly, I felt nothing clearly. The only thing I remember distinctly was the third

man in the second file held his gun in rather a slipshod manner, aiming it first at my midriff, next pointing it at my nose—which strangely enough caused me intense annoyance. How long we stood thus I don't know. The next thing I remember was a rattle of grounding arms and the sight of two other officers, excitedly gesticulating with the one in charge of the firing squad. All three presently came towards me and one, pulling out a flask of cognac, with a polite bow offered me a drink. I needed it; but didn't take it. All this time I had been standing motionless with my arms folded across my breast. I heard one say to the other, "Nitchka Curacha" (no coward). If he had only known.

Indeed, had I anticipated such an experience, had I known the things I know now I doubt if I would have been so pleased with the results of my first visit to Koenigergratzer-strasse 70, where the Intelligence Department of the German Admiralty is quartered. Will the reader step back with me in the narrative to the day of my officially joining the Service? Returning to my hotel after my interview with Captain von Tappken in his office, I began to reflect.

I had not entered the Service out of pure adventure or for monetary reasons alone. Money has never appealed to me as the all-powerful thing in life. I have always had enough for creature comforts and as for adventure I had had my fill during the Boer War and my world wanderings. No, I had joined the German Secret Service for quite a different reason. I was thinking of the influences that had pressed me out of my destined groove, by every human right my own. I remember how sanguine Count Reitzenstein was that through the Service I ought to gain the power I had lost. But as I sat in the hotel room, had occult powers been given me, I never would have taken up Secret Service work. But one is not quite as wise at twenty-four as at thirty-nine.

Well satisfied with my prospects, I arose early the next morning and walked briskly to Captain Tappken's office. Punctually at ten o'clock I announced myself at the Admiralty and after the usual procedure with the doorman, I was received by Herr von Stammer, private secretary of Captan Tappken. A very astute and calculating gentleman is Herr von Stammer. Suave, genial, talkative, he has the plausible and unstudied art of extracting information without committing himself in turn. A marvellous encyclopædia of devious Secret Service facts, an ideal tutor.

When we were alone in his office, von Stammer began by saying abruptly:

"From now on, you must be entirely and absolutely at

our service. You will report daily at twelve noon by telephoning a certain number. At all times you must be accessible. You will pay close attention to the following rules :

"Absolute silence in regard to your missions. No conversations with minor officials but only with the respective heads of departments or to whomever you are sent. You will make no memoranda nor carry written documents. You will never discuss your affairs with any employee in the Service whom you may meet. You are not likely to meet many. It is strictly against the rules to become friendly or intimate with any agent. You must abstain from intoxicating liquors. You are not permitted to have any women associates. You will be known to us by a number. You will sign all your reports by that number. Always avoid telephoning, telegraphing and cabling as much as possible. In urgent cases do so, but use the cipher that will be supplied to you."

He went on to give numerous other minor details and instructions, elaborating the system, but which might prove wearisome here. I was in the office all the forenoon, and when he ushered me out I half expected to be called into von Tappken's presence to be sent on my first mission. Instead of that, I had to wait five months before I was given my first work and an exceedingly unimportant thing it was. During those five months I was kept at a steady grind of schooling in certain things. Day after day, week after week, I was grounded in subjects that were essential to efficient Secret Service work.

Broadly, they could be divided into four classes—topography, trigonometry, naval construction and drawing. The reasons for these you will see from my missions. My tutors were all experts in the Imperial Service. A Secret Service agent sent out to investigate and report on the condition, situation, and armament of a fort like Verdun in France must be able to make correct estimates of distances, heights, angles, conditions of the ground, etc. This can only be done by a man of the correct scientific training. He must have the science of topography at his finger-tips ; he must be able to make quick and accurate calculations using trigonometry, as well as possessing skill as a draftsman. In my mission to Port Arthur, where I had to report on the defences, I found this training invaluable.

The same applies to the subject of naval construction. Before entering the German Secret Service, I certainly knew the difference between a torpedo and a torpedo boat destroyer, but naturally could not give an accurate description of the various types of destroyers and torpedoes. My instructor

in this subject was Lieutenant Captain Kurt Steffens, torpedo expert of the Intelligence Department of the Imperial Navy. After a month of tutelage under him, I was able to tell the various types of torpedoes, submarines, and mines, etc., in use by the principal powers. I could even tell by the peculiar whistle it made whether the torpedo that was being discharged was a Whitehead or a Brennan.

I was also drilled in the construction of every known kind of naval gun. Dozens of model war-craft were shown to me and explained. I saw the model of every warship in the world. For days at a time I was made to sit before charts that hung from the walls of certain rooms in the Intelligence Department and study the silhouettes of every known varying type of war-craft. I was schooled in this until I could tell at a glance what type of a battleship, cruiser, or destroyer it was, whether it was peculiar to the English, French, Russian, or United States Navy. The different ranking officers of the navies of the world, their uniforms, the personnel of battleships, the systems of flag signals, and codes, were explained to me in detail. I was given large books in which were coloured plates of the uniforms and signal flags of every navy in the world. I had to study these until at a glance I could tell the rank and station of the officers and men of the principal navies. The same with the signal flags. I pored over those books night after night into the early hours of the morning. My regular hours for tuition were from ten to twelve in the forenoon and from two until six in the afternoon. But it was impossible to compress all the work into that time. I was anxious to get my first mission, and I presume I did a great deal of cramming.

My study was not all in Berlin. I spent most of my time there at Koenigergratzerstrasse 70 and at the Zeughaus, the great museum of the German General Staff. But there were side trips to the big government works at Kiel and Wilhelmshafen. There I was taught every detail of the mechanics of naval construction and I was not pronounced equipped until I could talk intelligently about every unassembled part of a gun, torpedo tube, or mine.

In the course of my five months' instruction under the various experts of the Prussian Service I had many opportunities to observe the exhaustive thoroughness and the minuteness of detail which the German General Staff possesses. I did not lose the chance of this opportunity. I really did observe and see more than was intended for me to see. Of the amazing amount of labour, time and money that has been spent to gather the information contained in the secret

archives of the German General Staff, the marvellous system of war that has been perfected in the German Empire, I shall tell when I consider the secrets of the War Machine.

Naturally, I soon came to know still other things from what they taught me. I began to consider the whole proposition of Secret Service, and before relating my first important mission for Germany I shall tell you some of the general secrets of the system.

There are four systems of Secret Service in Europe, the four leading Powers each possessing one. First in systematic efficiency is the German, next comes the Russian, then the French, and English. England has a very efficient service in India and her Asiatic possessions, but has only lately entered the European field. Last but not least comes the International Secret Service Bureau with headquarters in Belgium, a semi-private concern which procures reliable information for any one who will pay for it. This service is generally entrusted with the procuring of technical details, such as the plans of a new kind of gun or data on a new and minor fortification. Mr. Vance Thompson has also cited special missions like this one that follows.

Not often does the chance come to leave the regular channels of espionage and go forth upon a mission out of the ordinary. That chance came a few years ago to the Russian agents in Brussels. In St. Petersburg the chiefs were desirous of knowing the identity and names of a group of revolutionists who had formed a sort of colony in Montreux, Switzerland. A French woman, known sometimes as Theresa Prevost (the last I heard of her she was in prison) was detailed to the mission. Young and clever was Theresa; likewise the man who was ordered to accompany her, posing as a "brother," Charles Prevost.

The chief of these Russian fugitives, who were down around the lake of Geneva, brewing their dark plans, was known. He was Goluckoffsky, and he had a son twenty-two years of age—an impressionable Russian son. Hence the young and pretty Theresa.

It was decided by her Brussels chiefs that she assume the role of an heiress from Canada. Five thousand francs for preliminary expenses were handed over to her and with Charles, the brother, she descended upon Montreux. If you were there at the time you will recall the social triumph made by the young Canadian heiress. You may even remember that she seemed to be infatuated with the young, impressionable son of old Goluckoffsky. The day long they were together. They were going to be married, and Charles Prevost the

"brother," stood in the background, chatted amiably with old Goluckoffsky and his friends and smiled.

Then as an heiress should, Theresa and her "brother" invited Goluckoffsky, his family and friends, to a pre-nuptial luncheon. No expense was spared, for the wires had moaned with requests sent to Brussels for money. Young Goluckoffsky was delighted with his fiancée. She was insistent that *all* his friends should be there, all the revolutionaries—although, of course, his dear Theresa did not know that. How the spelling of their names puzzled her. With gay heart young Goluckoffsky wrote out all their names on a slip of paper so she could send their invitations properly—the names St. Petersburg wanted to know.

Came the day of the luncheon, a gala affair in the banquet room of the hotel. Theresa looked charming; even the grimmest of the old revolutionists were taken with her. Old Goluckoffsky beamed upon this sparkling febrile woman, rich too, who was to marry his son.

Ices had been served when Theresa, her pretty face in smiles, declared that she had a surprise for her guests. To her it was the day of days. What better than a group photograph of her dear and new friends? How she would treasure it? Strangely enough this did not please the guests. Photographs were dangerous. Suppose, in some way, the *Okrana* got hold of them. They breathed easier, though, when Theresa, calling in the photographer—the best in Lausanne, she assured them—instructed him to deliver all copies to Mr. Goluckoffsky, her dear father-in-law to be. So the revolutionists grouped themselves on the hotel lawn; the photographer pressed the bulb; and everybody laughed.

As quickly as the photographer could print his proofs they were delivered to Theresa; that night she and her "brother" left Montreux. In two days the names of all the revolutionists in young Goluckoffsky's handwriting and their pictures were delivered to the chief in Brussels. A substantial fee was paid Theresa, besides, and she must have smiled; some of those young Russians are delightful.

So much for an example of the clever work done by Brussels. The German Service, in which I served on and off for twelve years, has three distinct branches—the Army, Navy, and Personal, each branch having its own chief and its own corps of men and women agents. The Army and Navy divisions are controlled by the General Staff of Berlin (Grosser General Stabe), the most marvellous organisation in the world. The Political and Personal branch is controlled from the Wilhelmstrasse, the German Foreign Office, the

Emperor in person, or his immediate Privy Councillor. The Army and Navy divisions confine themselves to the procuring of hidden and secret information as regards armaments, plans, discoveries, etc. The Political branch concerns itself with the supervision of meetings between potentates, cabinet ministers and so forth. The Personal branch, under the direct control of the Privy Councillor, is used by the Emperor for his own special purposes and service in this branch is the *sine qua non* of the service.

The Personal consists of all classes of men and women. Princes and counts, lawyers and doctors, actors and actresses, mondaines of the great world, demi-mondaines of the half world, waiters and porters, all are made use of as occasion arises. It may well happen that your interesting acquaintance in the salon of an express steamer or your charming companion in the tea-room of the Ritz is the paid agent of some government. Great singers, dancers and artists, especially of Russian and Austrian origin, are often spies. Notably Anna Pavlowa, famous for light feet and nimble wit, said wit being retained by the Russian Government at 50,000 roubles per annum. When Mlle. Pavlowa travelled in Germany she had the honour of a very unostentatious bodyguard, the Government being anxious that nothing should happen to *them*. Perhaps Mademoiselle remembered a little incident at the Palais de Danse in Berlin—Anna *v*. He of Liechtenstein.

Or perhaps Mademoiselle recalled a little episode in the Ice Arena in Berlin during a certain New Year's Eve carnival when the restoration—not the loss—of her magnificent gold chatelaine bag caused her much embarrassment. The chatelaine in question being dexterously commandeered by an expert in such matters of the Secret Service squad.

It happened that the Personal Branch of the German Secret Service was exceedingly interested in that gold bag. Mademoiselle had been carrying on an affair with a young ordnance officer of the Potsdam garrison. Now the Service does not like to see officers, especially those of the ordnance, becoming involved with ladies like the Pavlowa. On this particular night he had presented her with the new bag and she had been injudicious enough to have kept in the golden receptacle a dangerously compromising letter that he had enclosed. Injudicious, dear lady! Corsage or stockings, Mademoiselle; but vanity bags—never!

I have reason to believe that the following incident cost the Pavlowa a rather remunerative engagement in Berlin.

Celebrating the coming of the New Year, Mademoiselle

and her party were feasting in the Ice Arena. I happened to be at a nearby table, and saw everything ; as well as later hearing the inside of it.

The gold chatelaine lay on the table at her elbow. Upon observing its position, the waiter—a secret agent on the case —deliberately tipped over a champagne glass that stood within a few inches of the bag. Of course Mademoiselle was worried lest the wine run over on her gown, and while thus preoccupied the waiter, stammering apologies, mopped up the tablecloth with his serviette—mopped up the wine and cleverly covering the bag folded it in the napkin and hurried away. In two minutes he had opened it, abstracted the letter from the young ordnance officer ; and was back, apologising to the Pavlowa.

" Your pardon, Mademoiselle," he said, handing her the gold chatelaine. " In my haste I picked up this bag by mistake. I suppose it is yours."

With a slight start she said " Yes," took the bag and hurriedly opening it felt for the letter. To her dismay it was gone. I saw her eyes narrow a little and then I marvelled at the cleverness of the woman.

" No," she suddenly said, " that is not my bag. I never saw it before. I advise you to find the owner."

Clever Anna ! You sacrificed the costly gift, but you went over the frontier just the same.

The necessary qualifications of an agent vary, of course, with the class of work to be done. We can dismiss the waiter and the porter class, as they never receive independent commands and work only under direct supervision on minor details without knowing why. The trusted agent handling important matters and documents must needs be a person of intelligence, tact and address. He must be a linguist and, above all, a man of resource and a close student of his fellow men. In the woman agent charm and tact, beauty and manners, *a la grande dame*, knowledge of the world and men are essential. The pay varies, but is always good. Expenses are never questioned, the money being no object. For instance, I spent on a mission through the Riviera 20,000 marks in fourteen days. My fixed salary towards the end was 10,000 marks a year, besides twenty marks a day living expenses when not at work, which was automatically tripled irrespective of expenses when out on work. Besides, there is a bonus set out for each piece of work, the amount of which varies with the importance of the case in hand. I received as much as 30,000 marks for a single mission performed successfully.

The risks are great, so are the rewards—if successful. If not, then one pays the usual price of failures, in this case only more so. For in the event of disaster no official help or protection could or would be granted, and quarter is neither asked nor given. The work is interesting and fascinating to those of an adventurous turn of mind and not overly nervous about their health or squeamish in regard to established ethics. I would not suggest the Secret Service as a means of livelihood for a nervous person. At times it is arduous and strenuous work, and mostly undertaken by men and women who fear neither man nor devil. It is not compatible to longevity. As a rule, the constant strain of being on the *qui vive*, playing a lone hand against the most powerful influences often unknown, having one's plans upset at the last moment and continually pitting one's own brain against some of the cutest and shrewdest minds of the world, the knowledge that the slightest blunder means loss of liberty, often of life, is wearing, to say the least.

I have known men and women, courageous to a degree, who have broken down under the strain ; sooner or later one is bound to succumb. I have known of a dozen men and women who have mysteriously disappeared, "dropped out of sight," caught or killed—*not always by their opponents.*

To cite but two cases, one of a woman, the other of a man.

Olga Bruder was a spy. She worked for Germany and for the Service Bureau of Brussels. A few years ago it was announced in the European newspapers that a woman known as Olga Bruder had committed suicide in a hotel at Memel on the Russian border. Fräulein Bruder had been sent after the plans of a Russian fort. In Berlin they learned that she had obtained them, but becoming involved in a love affair with a Russian officer was holding them out, planning to restore them to him. Also, contrary to the Service regulations, she knew four foreign agents well. Later reports from Danzig revealed the fact that she had become enamoured with a sectional chief of the Russian Service and that she was about to give up everything to him. So Olga Bruder committed suicide. *She was poisoned.*

As for Lieutenant von Zastrov, an ex-army officer in the German Secret Service, he was killed in a duel. Zastrov was suspected of flirting with Russian agents—only suspected. He knew too much to be imprisoned. He was a civilian and under the German law entitled to a public hearing. Had he still been a military man, a secret tribunal would have been possible, but being the scion of an old aristocratic house and

knowing official secrets, it was not wise to put him in against the regular machinery of elimination. So Zastrov was challenged to a duel. He killed the first man the Service chiefs sent against him, yet no sooner was that duel over than he was challenged again. In half an hour Zastrov was dead.

Yes, your own employers often think it advisable at times to eliminate a too clever or knowing member of their service, unless that same member has procured for himself a solid good " life insurance " in the nature of documentary evidence of such character that to meddle with him brings danger of disclosure. Of late there have been no attempts on my life.

MATAHARI AND SOME OTHER WOMEN SPIES

By
SIR BASIL THOMSON

THROUGHOUT the War, though women spies were convicted, no woman was executed in England. In France there were one or two executions apart from any that may have taken place near the Front, where espionage was highly dangerous. The case of Margaret Gertrud Zeller, better known as Matahari ("Eye of the Morning"), has overshadowed all the other cases. Her father was a Dutchman who, while in the Dutch East Indies, married a Javanese woman. He brought her home to Holland, and there the daughter became known as an exponent of a form of voluptuous oriental dancing that was new to Europe at that time. She was tall and sinuous, with glowing black eyes and a dusky complexion, vivacious in manner, intelligent and quick in repartee. She was, besides, a linguist. When she was about twenty she married a Dutch naval officer of Scottish extraction named Macleod, who divorced her. She was well known in Paris, and until the outbreak of war she was believed to be earning considerable sums of money by her professional engagements. She had a reputation in Holland, where people were proud of her success and, so cynics said, of her graceful carriage, which was rare in that country.

In July, 1915, she was fulfilling a dancing engagement in Madrid, when information reached England that she was consorting with members of the German Secret Service, and might be expected before long to be on her way back to Germany *via* Holland. This actually happened early in 1916. The ship put in to Falmouth, and she was brought ashore, together with her very large professional wardrobe, and escorted to London. I expected to see a lady who would bring the whole battery of her charms to bear upon the officers who were to question her. There walked into the room a severely practical person who was prepared to answer any question with a kind of reserved courtesy, who felt so sure of herself and of her innocence that all that remained in her was a desire to help her interrogators. The only thing

graceful about her was her walk and the carriage of her head. She made no gestures, and, to say truth, time had a little dimmed the charms of which we had heard so much, for at this time the lady must have been at least forty.

I have said she was openness itself. She was ready with an answer to every question, and of all the people that I examined during the course of the War she was the " quickest in the uptake." If I quoted to her the name of some person in Spain with whom it was compromising to be seen in conversation she was astounded. He a suspect ? Surely we must be mistaken.

" I see how it is," she said at last, " you suspect me. Can I speak to you alone ? " The room was cleared of all but one officer and myself. She looked at him interrogatively.

" I said ' Alone.' "

" Yes," I replied, " this gentleman and I may be regarded as one person."

" Very well," she said, " then I am going to make a confession to you. I am a spy, but not, as you think, for the Germans, but for one of your allies—the French."

I do not know to this moment whether she thought we would believe her, but she plunged then into a sea of reminiscence, telling us of the adventures she had undergone in pursuit of the objects of her employers. I wondered how many of them were true.

We had altogether two long interviews with Matahari, and I am sure that she thought she had had the best of it. We were convinced now that she was acting for the Germans, and that she was then on her way to Germany with information which she had committed to memory. On the other hand, she had no intention of landing on British soil or of committing any act of espionage in British jurisdiction, and with nothing to support our view we could not very well detain her in England ; so at the end of the second interview I said to her, " Madame " (she spoke no English) " we are going to send you back to Spain, and if you will take the advice of some one nearly twice your age, give up what you have been doing." She said, " Sir, I thank you from my heart. I shall not forget your advice. What I have been doing I will do no more. You may trust me implicitly," and within a month of her return to Spain she was at it again.

This time she was captured on the French side of the frontier and, as I heard at the time, with compromising documents upon her. I should have thought that so astute a lady would have avoided documents at all hazards. They carried her to Paris, put her on her trial, and on 25th July,

1916, condemned her to death, but there was, as there is usually in such cases, an interminable delay, and it was not until 15th October that she was taken from Saint Lazaire Prison to Vincennes for execution. A French officer who was present described to me what happened. She was awakened at five o'clock in the morning, and she dressed herself in a dark dress trimmed with fur, with a large felt hat and lavender kid gloves. With an escort of two soldiers, her counsel and a padre, she was driven to Vincennes. When she came in sight of the troops she gently put aside the ministrations of the padre and waved a salute to the soldiers. She refused to be blindfolded, and she was in the act of smiling and greeting the firing-party when the volley sent her pagan spirit on its journey.

Another lady who was taken off a ship in transit from Rotterdam to Barcelona was the cause of diplomatic remonstrances. She was a German named Lisa Blume, and she was accompanied by an aged German duenna who had been a governess in her earlier years. Attention was first called to Fräulein Blume by the enormous quantity of baggage she was carrying. She had no fewer than seventeen trunks filled, for the most part, with expensive clothes, which hardly seemed to fit in with her story that she was housekeeper to a member of the German Embassy in Madrid. She was most indignant at her treatment, and she refused to answer any questions at all. Her duenna, however, was more communicative. Fräulein Blume, she said, was the daughter of a railway official in Germany, and though undoubtedly housekeeper, she was also in confidential relations with the Counsellor of the Embassy. When we came to search her baggage we discovered a ration of nine iron crosses, which she appeared to be conveying to the personnel of the German Embassy. There was reason to believe, moreover, that she was the bearer of messages probably committed to memory, from the German Government to their representatives. Under these circumstances we interned her and retained the decorations, but the duenna was allowed to proceed upon her journey. We thought it likely that the incident would not be allowed to pass without comment, and in due course representations were received from two neutral Powers who, when the true relations of Fräulein Blume with her employer were explained, appear to have dropped the question rather hurriedly.

Towards the end of 1915 some very remarkable telegrams were handed in at Malta. They were a meaningless jumble of words, and evidently a code, and it was decided that the

sender was a woman who called herself Madame Marie Edvige de Popowitch, a Serb, who had come to Malta for the state of her health. She looked astonishingly well for an invalid. Her flow of eloquence was reported to be extraordinary. Among her effects was found a Dutch dictionary in which certain words were underscored, and some of these words occurred in the telegrams. On probing the possibility of this dictionary providing a code, it was found that the messages that were to have been dispatched to a certain port in the Mediterranean detailed the sailing of steamers from Malta. It was decided to send her to England to be dealt with, and she was put on board H.M.S. *Terrible*, together with two canaries, from which she refused to be separated. The voyage was stormy in more than one sense, and the captain did his best to placate his prisoner, but it was whispered that on one occasion when he went to listen to her complaints about her rations she flung a beef-steak full in his face.

It was with this reputation that she came before us. On that occasion three officers were present besides myself. The lady entered my room calm but determined. She was one of the shortest women I have ever seen, and certainly the broadest. Sitting in the low arm-chair, her head scarcely reached to the top of the table, but it would have been a mistake, I saw at once, to treat her as negligible in any other respect. She spoke French. In the earlier stages of our interview I was "ce Monsieur," at a later stage I was "ce maudit policeman." It was my rather searching inquiry into her reasons for possessing an ancient Dutch dictionary that provoked the change. The difficulty was that when any question was put to her she never stopped talking even to take breath. Her voice rose and rose until the very walls reverberated with it. I do not know what a welkin is, but I am quite sure that if we had had one over our heads that morning it would have been rung. Her excitement rose with her voice, and finding herself at the usual disadvantage in sitting in a low chair, she got up from it and came nearer and nearer until her gesticulations began narrowly to miss our faces. There was a point at which one of the officers with me began unostentatiously to remove the paper-knives, pens, rulers, and other lethal weapons that lay at my right hand, and to push them out of her reach, but she became at last so violent, and her hands were so nearly at the level of our faces that we rose too, and as she advanced upon us, still talking, we gave way, until she was at the table and we were half-way to the door. As nothing would stem the torrent of her eloquence

it was suggested in a whisper that we should all bow gravely to her and leave the room, sending in the proper people to get her into a taxi. I do not suppose that those silent and dignified vaulted corridors have ever re-echoed such language as the lady used on her way to the taxi. I was told afterwards that the storm would have been far more severe if it had not occurred to the wily inspector who had to deal with her to talk to her soothingly about her canaries.

Madame Popowitch was medically examined as to the state of her mind, and we were advised that it would not be wise to try her on the capital charge. It was therefore decided to keep her in internment until the end of the War. She was removed to Aylesbury, where she bombarded the authorities with a myriad complaints. Nobody seemed to have pleased her except the captain of H.M.S. *Terrible*, who, she said, never failed to inquire after the health of her canaries. All this time these canaries were being looked after by the police, but at the suggestion of the prison authorities they were sent to Aylesbury, where it was reported they had a calming effect upon their mistress. In the end Madame Popowitch was certified insane and removed to an asylum.

Eva de Bournonville was probably the most incompetent woman spy ever recruited by the Germans. She was a Swede, of French extraction, well-educated and a linguist. Life had not prospered with her. She had been a governess in the Baltic Provinces, an actress (I should think a very bad one), and a secretary and typist employed occasionally at foreign Legations. In the autumn of 1915 she was out of work, when she was approached by one of the spy-recruiting agents in Scandinavia. It chanced that she had an acquaintance in Scotland whom she had met in Sweden. To this lady she wrote that she was coming to England for the sake of her health and proposed to pay her a visit. Provided with a Swedish passport, she had no difficulty in entering the country: she was, moreover, a lady by birth, and her manners were perfect.

On her arrival in London she put up at a cheap hotel in Bloomsbury, and wrote to her friend in Dumbartonshire, saying that after a good rest she proposed to apply for a post in the Censorship, for which her friend might give her a recommendation. The Scottish lady sent her the address of some acquaintances in Hackney, and advised her to call upon them. She did so, and finding that they were not at home, she left a card on which she had given the Danish Legation at Pont Street, W., as her address, for it appears that she had made arrangements to have remittances sent to

her through the Danish Legation. On this she received an invitation to Hackney where, however, she soon began to excite uneasiness in the minds of her new acquaintances. With all her education she was remarkably stupid at the business of espionage. She called again and again, and went out walking with the family. There were a good many Zeppelin raids in those days, and she was continually plying her host with questions about the anti-aircraft defences. Could she be taken to see the nearest gun? How many guns were there in London? How far could they shoot up in the air? And once, when she accompanied the family to Finsbury Park, she said, "Oh, this is Finsbury Park. Where are the Zeppelin guns placed here?" At last she asked her host to recommend her to the Postal Censorship, and here he put down his foot and said, "You see, if anything went wrong we should get into serious trouble." On this she dropped the family in Hackney, who remembered afterwards that she had said on one occasion, "The Germans know everything that passes here. You cannot hide anything from them."

She failed in her application to join the Censorship, chiefly on account of the lack of satisfactory English references. She told the lady who interviewed her how her father had been a general in the Danish Army, and her grandfather a music-teacher to Queen Alexandra, while an aunt was still acting in that capacity to the Danish Royal Family.

She left Bloomsbury for lodgings in South Kensington, and later for a certain Ladies' Club. Then she returned to Bloomsbury, and put up at a private hotel in Upper Bedford Place, where army officers were wont to spend their leave. She was unremitting in her questions to subalterns.

For some time letters, afterwards proved to be in her handwriting, containing information that would not have been of much use to the enemy had he received it, had been intercepted, but beyond the handwriting there was nothing that would give the identity of the writer. At last certain observations in one of the letters pointed to a particular hotel in Upper Bedford Place, but in that hotel there were more than thirty guests, and it was impossible to determine which of them was the spy. A certain officer who was employed on the case determined to test the matter in the simplest possible way. He selected one or two of the most likely of the guests and whispered to them incredible stories about secret engines of war that were in preparation. The most incredible of all was told to Eva de Bournonville, and on the following day a letter was intercepted containing this very information which, if it had reached the German spy agent, ought to have

caused his remaining hairs to rise in their places. De Bournonville was arrested on 15th November, 1915. She expressed great surprise, and made no admissions. In my room on the following day she made a brave show of innocence until I produced her letter and showed it to her, with the messages in secret ink between the lines developed. She opened her eyes very wide and said, "Yes, it is my handwriting, but how did *you* get it?" I told her that I had got a good deal more. She then asked to be allowed to see me alone, and the room was cleared of all but a military officer.

"You may think it curious," she said, "but I always wanted to work for you and not for the Germans. I am very fond of the English and the Belgians, and I do not like the Germans at all. Never have I forgotten their behaviour to Denmark in 1864. My idea was to make the Germans believe I was working for them until I was fully in their confidence and then offer my services to you. I only did this for adventure."

It then appeared that the German military attaché in Sweden, acting with an agent of the Secret Service, had induced this wretched woman to imperil her life for £30 a month. A cheque for that amount was actually found in her possession on her arrest, and she claimed to be allowed to keep it. She was tried before Mr. Justice Darling at the Old Bailey on 12th January, 1916, and was sentenced to death by hanging. Following our universal practice of not executing women, the King commuted the sentence to one of penal servitude for life. She was sent to Aylesbury to serve her sentence, and was repatriated in February, 1922. It transpired in the course of this case that the Germans were instructing their spies to address their letters to non-existent Belgian prisoners of war.

Towards the end of 1917 the Germans had ceased to employ agents in England for obtaining naval and military information. What they were then concerned about was the public morale, I suppose because their own was giving premonitory symptoms of crumbling. We first became aware of this through the letters written by a Mrs. Smith to her relations in Germany. Mrs. Smith proved to be a working housekeeper. Originally she had been a German nurse in Switzerland, where she had married one of her patients, an English doctor, not long before his death. Having thus acquired British nationality, she came to England, where she found herself obliged to eke out the slender provision her husband had made for her by taking work as a housekeeper.

Her letters, written in German, contained gems like the following :

> 'Tell Uncle Franz that Fritz is perturbed at seeing so many of the trout in his fish-pond eaten by the pike. If more pike get into the pond there will soon be none of his trout left. It makes him very angry and frightened.'

And in another letter she writes :

> 'On Sunday I went out to see the place where the big birds roost. It was full of birds, and some of them are very big indeed. It is said that they will soon take longer flights. I do not think that the great eagles that fly over us are frightening these birds ; they only make them angry.'

Mrs. Smith made a brave attempt to explain these letters away. She had, she said, an uncle named Franz who bred trout in a fish-pond, and who had written to her about the depredations of pike. And about the great birds she ventured the suggestion that they were herons ; but when we put before her our own interpretation of this simple code she became silent and resigned, and she retired into interment at Aylesbury with a philosophic heart.

THE DRAMA OF HASSELT

By
JOSEPH CROZIER
Translated by Forrest Wilson

Because of his varied experiences as a banker and a lawyer, Joseph Crozier was chosen by the celebrated Second Bureau of the French General Staff to go to Holland and there direct espionage against Germany.

He was known under his own name as an oil merchant of Rotterdam ; but as Lieutenant Pierre Desgranges he directed a ruthless band of secret agents. Among these were the Countess Elisa de Rollenberg, Dr. Deblauw (who had a useful knowledge of poisons), Dom Bernard, a fanatically patriotic monk and many others, some of whom appear in the following account of a traitor's reward.

For two days I had been at the branch house of the N. V. Stoomzeep Fabrik "Venus" in Düsseldorf occupied in the preparation of an important shipment to the Zentral Einkaufs Gesellschaft. This shipment was billed to the marine base at Antwerp. For this reason I held a passport for the two destinations : Antwerp and Düsseldorf.

A dull presentiment was bothering me, and I was passing an uneasy night in the bedroom adjoining my office. Frequent awakenings interrupted my fits of slumber, which seemed whole hours long, but which really never lasted more than a few minutes.

I had scarcely dozed off again when I heard scratchings on my door. Abruptly awake, I sat bolt upright. I did not stir, trying to comprehend. If it were the police—a thing that had happened before—I was not going to be long about knowing it. I must therefore appear perfectly natural in my innocent calm. But the scratchings came again. No voice, no sound other than that which might be made by finger-nails being drawn over wood.

No longer able to pretend sleep, I called out, like one who had just been aroused : "Who's there?"

"Open, open," came back a voice which manifestly sought to be heard only by me.

I did not understand. I repeated my challenge with more force.

"What's the matter?" I cried. "This is no time to disturb people. At least tell me why."

I then drew near the door. The office clock had just struck two. I could even see the hands of it in the ray of moonlight which pierced through the window after drawing upon the Rhine a long ribbon of silver. All seemed calm. Only the voice continued to break the silence.

"Open—open up," it repeated, realising that now only the thickness of the door separated us: "it is Lise!"

The door opened and closed behind her who was so often my enlightener, and toward whom I now preserve the gratitude of the shipwrecked sailor toward his saviour. The Countess de Rollenberg, without looking at me, went straight to the table in front of her and placed there a revolver which she had been hiding in her corsage. She added to it some cartridges contained in a little sack that seemed part of the belt she was wearing under her skirt. Then she turned to me.

"Leave at once," she said. "There is not an instant to lose. Before daybreak the German police are coming to arrest you in this place, and they will not let you go again."

Had I refused to read thrillers only to live one myself? What did these words mean—this melodrama, this revolver?

Seeing my bewilderment, the countess explained:

"Reusens, Richardson, de Roël and the others are behind the bars at Hasselt. The German Secret Service is on your trail. By arresting you here they think now they will get Pierre Desgranges. Hurry! It will soon be too late."

And she held out the revolver to me.

What I had just heard was sufficient indication to me that the frontier would be closed to me on both the Dutch and the Belgian sides, and that I must not expect to be able to leave Düsseldorf without trouble, since I was due to be arrested here within a few hours.

Impatiently the countess impelled me toward the door, repeating only:

"Day after to-morrow. We will be at Luiksgestel in the evening, and we will stay there waiting for you."

I was alone on the quays of Düsseldorf. My mind was made up. The first train for Antwerp was leaving in two hours. I was going to try to take it at Neuss, the first station out. I did not walk, I ran. After a few kilometres I finally stopped, completely out of breath and unable to run more. Almost at once, though, I regathered what energy I had left and strode once more along the road to Neuss; but thenceforth it was impossible for me to quicken my pace.

The train had already been announced when I reached the station. I used the few minutes remaining to resume a calm and peaceful appearance ; and thus I was able to take the train without hindrance.

My ultimate safety next required that I be not trapped by the minute inspection bound to be waiting for me at the Belgian frontier.

Thanks to the considerable slowing down of the speed on the curves just outside the station of Turnhout, I was able to jump off upon the right-of-way and disappear into the night. The little Belgian city of Turnhout lies in front of Luiksgestel—Dutch territory and land of salvation for me. The compass should serve me as guide. Day overtook me near a village. I thought that there I could buy a spade ; but in order not to show myself there at an hour when my presence might awake attention, I spent two hours in a ditch.

To avoid useless argument I had accepted the revolver which the countess had got for me, only to cast it into the Rhine almost immediately afterwards. I little cared to wander with that dangerous weapon ; it is only too likely to create suspicion, and I feared arrest too much as it was. The spade, on the contrary, is a useful tool which can on occasion become a terrible weapon, when its edges are sharp.

As I was resting near the frontier one day when hunting at Luiksgestel, I suddenly saw a man walking along calmly on the other side of the live wires and coming from Belgium. He drew near the wires, walking always with the same unhurried and regular step. Arriving at the obstacle he had to cross, he seized the spade which he was carrying over his shoulder and began to dig rapidly. Two hundred metres from there stood a German sentinel from whom I could not drag my eyes. Luckily he kept looking in another direction, though I was terrified with the feeling that he was going to turn at any moment. The man dug on. When he thought he could get through without danger of touching the live wire, he began to crawl under. Just then the sentinel saw him, fired, and missed. Methodically my entertainer, calm as ever, stood up, and, turning, made in the sentry's direction a gesture which, the world over, indicates a combination of carelessness and scorn.

When I asked this gallant fellow, after such a display of unadulterated courage, where he came from, he answered : "From Lille." And he explained how he had been able to cross Belgium, walking at night, sleeping by day, especially when he could escape all observation, or using his spade to

turn aside the attention of any doubtful passer-by by performing some rustic task with it.

The spade then appeared to me as an excellent offensive and defensive arm, and since that day it had made part of the equipment of the service.

In imitation of the fugitive from Lille, I set out in the direction of the Dutch frontier in the region of Luiksgestel. Reaching its neighbourhood at dawn of the second day, I passed interminable hours hidden in the briers which strew the little valleys of the Belgian Campine.

At the last glimmers of dusk I was about to go on when I saw marching along the hill-side, at the base of which I had concealed myself, a group which filled me with disquiet. The eleven men who composed it had already begun running to join me.

Despite their filth, which was even more repulsive than mine, I could recognize them as Russians. I was scarcely more elated than if I had found myself in the presence of eleven soldiers of the Kaiser. I hastened to make them lie down in the briers. The most intelligent one of them managed to make me understand that they had just run away from the defence works upon which the Germans employed their prisoners.

What was I going to do with twelve, when I was certainly enough by myself?

Since we were only a few kilometres from the Dutch frontier, it was impossible for me to abandon these men, who had come so inopportunely, but who were clinging to me like blind men to a guide. I had to accept a command which was all the more difficult from the fact that these new companions understood scarcely a word of German and not one of French.

We set forth. My apprehension was great, for in a Belgian café where I had stopped at the start of my last night's march, I had learned that active troops were now resting before Luiksgestel, where they had replaced the reserves ordinarily stationed there.

I made use of the directions upon which we of our service had agreed if one of us should be hunted. I hesitated about the place I should pick for the crossing. My companions bothered me tremendously. How were they going to behave themselves when the pinch came? Striving one last time to make them understand that they must scatter and run in the direction indicated, I started out over the stripped zone, running toward the wires.

A hail of bullets assailed us almost immediately. Flattened

upon the ground, we waited for a lull. Instinctively the Russians pressed themselves against me. I was not touched, and the enemy could fire only blindly in the darkness which surrounded us. Ricochets kept spattering me with earth and pebbles. The firing was keeping up, when suddenly I saw the barbed wire pricked out in the focus of a long shaft of light. A searchlight had just been brought into action, then a second, then a third. We were going to be revealed and pitilessly shot down by an infallible fire. It is beautiful, it is intoxicating, to die in battle. But I was going to perish in the dark without power of defending myself, with only a spade in my hands. The shooting redoubled as the projectors combed the terrain, when suddenly, like the signal for a salute, I distinguished the lower voice of our Winchester. Those waiting for me had come to the rescue. One searchlight went out, then another, under the shots of our friends. Then in the darkness, except for a few isolated shots and the far-off throbbing of a motor, all went back to silence. I imagined the Padre at the wheel of the car. Then the blessed sound of shears cutting the barbed wire came to us. The cry of the owl came next. But I had bounded off in advance, toward the passers who were waiting there.

I fell gasping in the midst of a burst of laughter. They all abandoned themselves to laughing to their heart's content. Above all, the doctor and Marie Holemans were convulsed at seeing the chief in such a piteous state. A curious welcome forsooth for a man who had just passed two hours between life and death.

But I was, truly, a funny sight. I was covered with earth, as any one might be who had come so near to having it for his winding-sheet. But I was content; I was safe. Four Russians failed to answer the roll-call. According to custom, Warans, the gamekeeper, assembled the passers and paid them.

After leading his men off to drink with the Russians, he entrusted the latter to one of them, with instructions to take them to the French Consulate at Rotterdam.

II

VERY weary, but happy, I revelled in the satisfaction of finding myself again in a neutral country sheltered from immediate danger. We all experienced a feeling of relief.

After any great strain a man is always likely to have such fits of selfishness and moments of levity. But we were not long

in falling back into the painful realisation of the difficult times through which we must still pass. The thought of our friends, prisoners of the Germans, all at once crushed us.

The Padre was now more impassable and silent than ever. The doctor was still. According to his wont, Bernay appeared unfeeling. The countess seemed to be waiting for my first question :

" How do you explain," I asked her, " the fact of all our friends being taken at Hasselt ? As to Pierre de Roël, to whom I sent Devos, I might understand. As to Reusens, I understand less, but as to Richardson, nothing at all. He should have been at Cologne."

" They took them to Hasselt to try them, but they had to arrest them wherever they found them," responded Lise.

" Devos never knew enough to accomplish all that ! "

" Agreed," replied the countess. " Devos has been only a tool."

Evidently she knew all, but too late. Our salvation now was only the neutrality of the soil on which we were standing.

And a wonderful help that was, to be sure, since, having been denounced to the Germans, we should henceforth be under surveillance at close range, thus put outside the possibility of functioning.

However, in any event we must get away from this place without delay. The Dutch, while claiming to be indifferent to frontier incidents, never failed to grow restless about them when their neutrality was in danger of being compromised. We climbed into the torpedo, which Dom Bernard had brought up to enable us to get to Rotterdam as quickly as possible.

I sat beside him, while the doctor was behind on a bracket seat. With his good Flemish sense, Deblauw broke the silence first.

" Old chap, you are sunk," he said to me. " You have nothing more to do but go back to France."

As I did not answer, he continued :

" In addition, your mission is ended. We are in the same boat with you. At the first move we would disappear—shot or otherwise."

I made some sort of gesture of dissent, but he insisted :

" Nobody will follow you any longer. The enemy will be on the watch for the first movement from any of your assistants. The danger is only too evident. It is too discouraging for those of us who are left."

I said nothing. If my friends were discouraged, then nothing remained for me but despair. In the midst of the War, with thousands of our compatriots dying every day for the

liberty of France and her Allies, were we going to be reduced to impotence or to die in inaction? The service which we had built up by dint of so much patience and tenacity—was it going to disappear?

At Rotterdam I left my companions in the living-room at Mathenesserlaan; and, because I had need of all my strength the next day, I retired to take a little rest. However, as I left, the Padre, standing, seemed to be presiding over a meeting of the faithful. He was alone in not showing any weariness.

The night brings counsel, thought I. They will do better, all of them, to leave it to that. If Dom Bernard intends to talk to them, what authority can he bring—in his ridiculous chauffeur's uniform?

I forgot the moral force he wielded through the religious faith by which all his companions, from Friedman, the Limburg farmer, up to Deblauw, the doctor scholar, were animated.

Next day I took lunch openly at the Doelen. The days which followed seemed long. The effort I put into expediting the daily business could not distract my thoughts from the terrible dilemma in which we were all caught.

I was still ignorant of what train of circumstances had brought about the arrest of our friends at the same hour in places so far distant from each other. To save us from some new misfortune I sought everywhere to find out and understand what had happened.

In living over the events which had just occurred with such rapidity, I drew up the balance-sheet of our critical position. Defeat was certain; its consequences were already showing themselves formidable, and a retreat in good order was going to be difficult to effect. Our best troops were destroyed; treachery in the heart of the place threatened the existence of the service. The enemy had discovered my double identity, so painfully established, so jealously kept hidden up to the present. Discouragement and fear had touched, it is true, neither the Padre nor Captain de Lesport. The women also were preserving a firm morale; but the fanaticism of the former and the weakness of the latter rendered vain the formulating of protective measures, urgent as they were.

It was without surprise that I learned it was Jeanne Claessens who had betrayed us; even as I had to acknowledge that the consequence of that fact must be the ruin of our whole edifice, for she knew all its secrets. She was brave, and we had accorded her an affectionate confidence. Unhappily she had escaped from the influence of Captain de Lesport,

lost as he was in his sanguinary dreams. This disaster had come too late to awaken our slumbering mistrust.

From the test, two beings emerged with all their courage intact—two beings who did not care for each other: the Padre and Lise.

The countess, who remained in regular touch with the German military circles in Belgium, left us henceforth only to gather precious information. As to Dom Bernard, I eventually decided to send him to Hasselt. Perhaps he could see the prisoners and bring back tidings useful for rebuilding the courage of the others. The Padre was unquestionably the one to carry out such a mission. His convent was in Belgium, making it easy to obtain a passport for him; his status as a priest would permit him besides to visit the condemned.

He left then, while Lise, redoubling her efforts, was like an animal caught in a trap, but showing more intelligence and power of reflection than ever. This woman had all the time understood, while I was keeping my eyes closed. Lesport and Jeanne Claessens, as Lise had been the first to realise, had shown for each other only a vain desire the more illusory for her as it was obscured the more in him by his visions of horrors.

The beautiful Flemish girl, intelligent and brave, had ended by showing a profound distaste for him toward whom events had originally led her. To divert herself she had, without letting us know it, taken to drugs. Her will-power had soon become submerged, and she had been able to hide from us the evidences of her vice.

I understood then the part Lise had played—her tremendous activity. The truth had suddenly appeared to her. She had not had a moment to lose. Having allowed the German woman, Gertrud Würtz, to believe that she herself was in the service of Germany, she had been able to make her talk; and the latter had fallen into the trap. The evening I left for Düsseldorf, while Devos went to play his sinister prank, Lise had succeded in finding out what was being hatched against us—too late, alas, for our captured friends, but soon enough to try at least to save the others.

Gertrud Würtz had not expected anything much from this Devos, whom she had sent to us. It was certainly not upon him that her choice would have fallen, if he had not had the qualification of having put her in touch with Jeanne Claessens, whose new passion had considerably increased her need for money.

And Lise herself went to the opium den, where she had made contact with her who had betrayed us. She had found

that woman stupefied, having denounced to the enemy our co-workers, but seeming either through calculation or remorse not to have yet delivered over all the secrets of our organisation. However, it could not be long before she would complete her betrayal, for she could not now avoid revealing all to the Germans, who were calling her to Antwerp.

"I know," added Lise, "that for reasons of secrecy and security the German authority wants her to take passage for Belgium on a brick-barge."

We ourselves had frequently made use of these boats between the ports of Antwerp and Amsterdam ; their crews were composed of Belgian sailors, anxious to render us service, but strictly watched by the Germans.

As to Gertrud Würtz, after having negotiated the betrayal, she had turned over the affair to the German Secret Service at Antwerp, which was now going to carry on her work. Because of other mysterious jobs, she was at present thinking only of obtaining a passage to England.

And it was in England that we were waiting for her. Aided by Bernay, Marie Holemans kept watch on her closely. We had first seen to it swiftly and secretly that she received all the travel facilities she desired. She embarked at a time and place actually chosen by us. We had warned the English Secret Service. The reception that we had arranged for her would avoid the necessity of our ever having to see her again.

Remained young Devos, who was one of those wretched agents of Baarle. He had no importance. His sole aim had been to swindle the Germans out of money. Like the rest of his kind, he served everybody without believing at all in the value of any of his information. Dismayed by a success which he had not foreseen, and which was due to the contact he had established between Gertrud Würtz and Jeanne Claessens, he had prudently withdrawn into obscurity. We would think about him later. We must first guard against the immediate and irreparable danger which would result from any new revelations given by Jeanne Claessens.

The situation evidently was becoming clearer. We must take a rapid decision capable of energetic execution. Were we going to have at our disposal a force strong enough to succeed ? I decided to await the return of Dom Bernard.

III

"THE Padre is here and asks to see you right away."

Such were Jeff's words to me upon entering my room that morning at six o'clock.

"Have him come in."

It put me in bad humour. All the time I was dressing myself, I listened absently to the monk, who kept lavishing upon me commiserations I had already heard and encouragements that did no good.

For a man who never spoke at all, this was strange behaviour to say the least. Finally, seeing that he was not interesting me in his talk about myself, he changed the subject and began the story of the experience he had just been through.

This severe ascetic, with all his fanaticism, as silent as it was violent—"this disturbing monk," as Lise called him—declared now that the memory of the massacres at Visé had not after all rendered him for ever bereft of feeling. He had just received the last words of Charles Reusens, but Reusens' only, for the regulations forbade the same priest administering to more than one condemned prisoner. Furthermore, the officers would not authorise the priest to accompany his penitent to the place of execution.

When the Padre first came to him in his cell, the condemned man had greeted him with this single sentence: "Was the chief saved?" Then, hearing the truth, he had immediately added, "The chief is safe; nothing is lost."

Dom Bernard did not at all conceal his astonishment at seeing this man who was going to die display at the supreme hour so much love for one whom he had never loved.

"It is true," Reusens had said, "that I came to him through patriotism, for I did not love the French. I love them now from having seen them at work for my country. Say to the chief that just before dying I cried first: '*Vive la France!*' and then: '*Vive la Belgique!*'"

And the Padre seemed intoxicated by the words.

"But what are you driving at, my dear friend? . . . I don't suppose it was to tell me all this, moving as it is, certainly, but scarcely of much use at this time of day, that you came to see me so early."

Unmoved by this response, he replied in a voice grown still gentler, "You are right. I came only to make a plea to you, not only in my own name, but also in behalf of all our friends."

"I am listening, but speak quickly. We have no time to lose. I must leave in a few moments."

"I came," Dom Bernard then said, "to ask your permission to say a mass for our good comrades that were executed at Hasselt."

My interlocutor certainly would have shown even more

hesitation than he did if he could have forseen my astonishment. Was it possible that he could be thinking of such things now in the circumstances we were in? I looked at the Padre first with inquietude and then with an irritation that I poorly concealed. His words and especially his thought seemed to me inopportune, not so much because of the disasters which had just occurred, but because we were still in the midst of events in which our very existence was at stake.

"But, my good Padre, say all the masses you like. For my part, I don't see anything wrong about that, although I must say I do not understand your motive in asking my permission. So long as you did not come to ask me to take part myself," I added, smiling, trying to soften my abruptness.

Dom Bernard did not smile. I was afraid I had wounded him.

"And where will you say this mass?" I continued, so as to seem to be taking an interest in his proposal. "I suppose you are not counting upon going to the Catholic churches of Rotterdam, to which you are not accredited. You would arouse needless curiosity, and this is not the time for that."

Regarding me more fixedly, he answered:

"That is exactly the explanation of my visit. Dr. Deblauw told me that this mass could be said in your house, and he asked me himself to request your authorisation without delay."

What could Deblauw have been thinking of? Was I, then, the only one left who was keeping his feet on the ground?

The eyes of the monk never left me. Our thoughts interchanged, our spirits clashed. Interrupting the silence to hold me with a look, he then said:

"But you do not understand, then?"

I had understood. The light of the believers had dispersed the mists that were encompassing my spirit.

The Padre had prevailed. Calmly, he added:

"The mass will be said, if you approve, before the meeting to-morrow, in which we shall take the decisions necessary for a situation which is badly compromised, but not yet hopeless."

Love, force, all earthly resources, had been impotent. But heaven was coming to my help. Through the religious zeal of the monk it was about to permit me to make one final effort with those shaken souls, whom faith alone could still galvanize.

"Agreed, my good Padre," I said to him finally, "I

approve of your pious and generous thought. Take up the details with Jeff."

And I left, after pressing the hand of him who, not satisfied with setting at naught all defeat, was still bringing me a precious aid in the accomplishment of a task the desperateness of which none knew better than me.

That was for us all a restful day. Spirits calmed themselves in the blessed haven of reverent thoughts. All kept talking about the requiem mass. I heard their plans with favour, pondering on the extent to which tribulations engender religious devotion—on the extent to which the most obdurate sectarians, once they have taken refuge there, rebuke in their new-found peace their former ridiculous boastings and their stupid unbelief.

While serving me at dinner, Jeff returned to the same subject, worrying over the preparations.

"Granted, Jeff, that we don't own what is necessary for a ceremony quite out of our sphere. Nevertheless, you know very well it can be arranged. Put my work-table in the drawing-room and cover it with our best cloth. The God of Hosts will be content with an emergency altar, for He judges us by our intentions. Place on that altar our two Dutch candlesticks; their ecclesiastical style is a happy circumstance. Get the white wine from the cellar, and the water from the tap; the two decanters will make quite acceptable sacramental vases; and the Padre will provide for the rest. As he likes to repeat, God will know His own, despite an equipment none too orthodox. Above all, leave the shutters carefully closed. I don't want indiscreet persons going about accusing me of having black masses said in my house. Really, that is about all I lack now."

Notwithstanding the morning hour fixed for the mass, the countess appeared first. She wore a dark dress, which she had tried to make austere, but she had succeeded merely in wrapping herself in a new charm and an unforeseen attractiveness.

All our friends began arriving one after another: Captain Mertens, Dr. Deblauw and Marie Holemans, Jan Friedman, Captain de Lesport. Warans, the gamekeeper, had abandoned his Campine to be with us; and Jeff, who had to serve in the ceremony, had put on his uniform. Otherwise he never wore it, despite the Dutch regulation requiring its wear by all interned soldiers.

The Padre was there. In the midst of graver faces and more profound looks he alone remained unchangeable. From the strange reverie in which he seemed to be taking refuge,

his smiling kindness appeared as if behind a transparent mask. From a poor little valise, as shabby as his own threadbare clothes, he now drew out carefully the sacred vases, a few priestly vestments, and the breviary which must take the place of the book of the mass. From the worn and inadequate bag which held them, all these pious objects, in colours dull and faded, came out crumpled and battered. Their pitiful aspect accorded only too well with the improvised altar and the furnishings of this rented house.

Behind the closed shutters, in the half-light of the candles, the prayers of the priest and the responses of Jeff murmured in antiphony. The devine office began.

I watched faces attentively; they were transfigured in the ecstasy of religious faith. The eyes that animated them seemed no longer to pertain to this world; they saw no more, and they feared no more, behind the invulnerable armour which fortified their souls.

The dream passed along. . . .

And I began reliving old memories. My will surrendered to the environment and the service and was strengthened. My thoughts floated toward other times and other places.

" O Christ, Thy worship was glorious even at the manger in Bethlehem, when the star led to Thy divine poverty the humblest as well as the great.

" Love and charity shining about Thee gave to Thy precepts such beauty that one of them alone might have made the world blessed if the world had not forgotten it—' Love ye then one another.' Or that other: ' Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.'

" But Thy ministers as well as Thy faithful are too often, alas, only weak men, whose deeds lead away from Thee the people who seek Thee as their light and their salvation. In turning themselves from the path which Thou in Thy mercy and loving-kindness hadst made for their feet, they went back to the worship of the golden calf, thus defying the great edifice which Thy blood and Thy tears had prepared for the love of men and the happiness of the humble.

" What is left to us of Thy divine precepts in these days of terror? Where are Thou Thyself, O Christ?

" Thou who hast said, ' Thou shalt not kill,' look upon Thy priest, this bigoted monk, whom nevertheless I love with all my heart, whose bloody hands are raised toward Thee. Look upon those about him, Thy prostrate adorers. They have killed yesterday, as they will kill to-morrow: and they are calling upon Thee in behalf of those who also killed, only to be killed in their turn.

"Thou are not, then, O Christ, the all-powerful God that they showed us in our youth, who was to drive from His temple the money-changers and the Pharisees that profane it—all these vile swine who seek in the bloody mud their profits and their honours, while we ourselves knead that mud with our bruised hands."

The voice of the priest was intoning:

"Grant them, Lord, eternal peace, and let Thy eternal light shine upon them."

My thoughts, escaping then, were taken up exclusively by the red tragedy. I saw our friends at the firing stake, I saw the execution squad, I glimpsed in a lightning-flash the German officer lowering his sabre as the command to fire. Each body in falling tore my heart a little more. With difficulty I was stifling a tear, when all at once I had the impression of being seized by a vigorous fist. That rough Fleming, the sturdy Charles Reusens, was there, saying to the Padre, as an incitement to the struggle, those words of supreme submission, "The chief is saved, nothing is lost. Tell him that to-morrow before I die, I will cry first, '*Vive la France*!' and then, '*Vive la Belgique*!'"

Grant them, Lord, eternal peace. . . .

The mass ended.

We tumbled down into matter-of-fact reality.

IV

JEFF was relieving the room of its religious aspect; the Padre had closed his poor little valise. We were already assembled for the meeting.

Sure now of his companions, whom he had recaptured by his exhortations and whose ardour he had reanimated, *Dom Bernard declared that it was necessary to do away with Jeanne Claessens, come what might and with no delay.*

He appreciated better than any one the implacable will of which the countess had already given proof, and which she was going to demonstrate again to save the mission and protect her chief. He knew that she must continue to be the infallible guide behind whom we must march in order to get out of the terrible morass in which we were held.

But nevertheless on that day, whether the requiem mass had produced different reactions in the Countess de Rollenberg and in Dom Bernard, or whether the monk wished to use at the earliest moment the authority he had newly acquired over these souls, the Padre seemed now to be preach-

ing a crusade, whereas the countess, silent, remained outside the enthusiasm which he wished to arouse.

She moved only to approve the decision, according to which Captain de Lesport was to carry out the execution.

To get rid of Jeanne Claessens by our usual methods was a thing not to be thought of, for she knew them too well from having practised them with us. It was necessary to meet her face to face; and the Padre thought that his old friend was exactly the one to succeed in it. Moved by a sullen hatred, the latter claimed as a right the authority to avenge us all. Because he had not succeeded in dominating her in life, he had decided, if necessary, to drag her with himself into death.

I suggested that perhaps we could try, as with Gertrud Würtz, to rid ourselves of Jeanne Claessens by leaving others the task of an execution which would be particularly hateful. But all seemed outraged by this attitude. No one of them shared a weakness which might seem human, but which was not less reprehensible on that account. For the existence of a traitress I would risk having my friends perish and letting the monument to our efforts be annihilated! But Jeanne Claessens was beautiful! I remembered my emotions when she had crossed the frontier, so bravely, so simply!

However, she was still in Rotterdam, convinced now that the Countess de Rollenberg was a betrayer like herself. The two women were meeting regularly in the opium den.

Two days after the requiem mass Lise informed us that Jeanne's departure was scheduled for the second day after, and that the time had come to go to Antwerp to wait for her.

That same evening Lesport left us to cross the frontier at a spot of his own choosing—in the marshes of Selzaate. From having hunted there often before the war, he knew that stricken region in all its details. Very difficult to cross, it offered him the advantage of being also difficult to guard.

"Adieu!" he said to us when leaving. "You can set your minds at ease."

We felt confident about that. Since she had left us, Jeanne Claessens had not seen Lesport, and she believed him in Belgium, where she could encounter him naturally.

To which Lesport added:

"Where I can encounter her, rather—in the open street at a pinch. I should be shot, that is all. I owe you even that."

Two days later Lise left us to go to Amsterdam to make sure of the embarkation of Jeanne Claessens. She was accompanied by Friedman.

Several days went by. We were without news of Captain de Lesport. Lise certified to us that the embarkation had taken place. Lesport would not let his prey escape. He would have to haunt the district of the Kommandantur ; and he had surely put himself in touch upon his arrival with the guides who worked for us in Antwerp.

At the end of a week the lack of news alarmed me, however, and my anxiety increased when Friedman, falling into step with me one day, whispered :

"Don't worry, everything is fixed."

As he was retreating at once, I caught up with him.

"What is fixed ?"

"Why, Jeanne Claessens !"

"How was it fixed ?"

"I don't know."

"Well, what are you talking about, then ? Who told you that ? Dr. Ceblauw ?"

"Oh ! the doctor doesn't know anything."

And Friedman sought once more to get away from me.

"Tell me, is she alive or not ?"

"Ah ! she is dead, all right. But since I tell you I know nothing . . ."

And Jan disappeared, without its having been possible to drag another thing out of him. Lise came in.

"You may rest easy," she said. Decidedly the countess and her condemned soul had been ordered to tell me the news with an excessive parsimony. I insisted upon an explanation.

"What's the use, since Jan has explained to you ?"

"A wonderful explanation—'Everything is fixed !' He didn't tell me anything more. For one who wishes to know, it's little."

"But what more do you want, then ?" retorted the countess. "I also tell you that everything is in order."

"What order, and how ?"

"It's useless for you to insist," said Lise obstinately. "Jeanne Claessens is dead ; you shouldn't ask more about it."

"And Lesport ?"

"He ? I suppose he is at Antwerp—mounting guard at the Kommandantur."

"I have the right to ask you for an explanation, and it's my duty to know what has happened," I insisted, assuming a severe manner.

Getting no answer, I gripped her wrist and repeated :

"I am the chief, do you understand ? You owe me a report on what you do. It is indispensable, so that I may estimate the possible consequences."

I gripped harder, but Lise did not yield. Conquering the pain and smiling with eyes in which the azure melted into amethyst, she said in a half-voice :

" See, the night is falling asleep. It is the hour when all people say their prayers. And so we are going to say one : 'Why speak when one has nothing to say ? And why speak when one can say something, since nine times in ten it is better to be silent ? ' "

V

All immediate danger seemed averted, but the existence of the mission still remained badly compromised.

Upon my return to Rotterdam I reappeared at the German Embassy ; and Herr Gneist in the course of a conversation calmly announced that I had been condemned to death by default by the military tribunal of Brussels.

" A sentence of death, by default, in war time ! " I answered, smiling.

But Herr Gneist took the matter seriously.

The interdiction which had been cast upon us implied our disappearance from the scene or our loss of effectiveness, one outcome as inacceptable as the other. We had safeguarded our lives. It was necessary now to safeguard our excuse for living. To re-establish confidence was the only way to attain that goal.

Vain as this appeared to be, it was our only preoccupation.

Resuming the headship of the movement after allowing the countess to clear the way, I explained to my friends my intention of adopting the only strategy possible in such a case, which consists, when one is hemmed in on all sides, in discovering the adversary's weak point and hurling oneself upon it with all one's forces and without looking behind.

After turning over to the doctor the large sum I then had on hand, I revealed to my companions the plan on which I intended to stand. I was going to go to the German Embassy at The Hague with the idea of obtaining a passport for Brussels.

" If I go aground there," I said to Deblauw, " you have on hand enough to assure my liberation. Arrested without any compromising documents, I should not go before a court martial, and you would have time to organise yourselves during my trial in a civil court."

The doctor knew, better than any of us, the officials of

the prisons of Brussels, and particularly those of the prison of Saint Gilles, where I should be sure to be interned.

"At this price," he said, considering the sum I was leaving with him, "there isn't a banker who would refuse to take a chance on you—and so, with greater reason still, those on whom your fate would depend."

In starting out next day for the German Embassy, I blessed that story of *Le Journal*, which ought still to leave me a certain amount of goodwill; I thanked heaven for having permitted my excellent contact and my regular business with the Zentral Einkaufs Gesellschaft; and I had decided to gamble with all that boldly.

There was a short silence during which I tried to penetrate the thoughts of the ambassador.

"I have just learned," I said, "that my property has been confiscated in Belgium, including my bank account and securities."

"That's right."

"Therefore I am asking for the authority to go at once to my place in Brussels."

"You have been sentenced to death."

My laugh seemed so genuine to the German diplomat that he managed the ghost of a smile himself.

"Better and better!" I replied sarcastically. "There's German gratitude for you—and at the time when I am rendering you the greatest services."

As I repeated my request with an assurance which could not bring itself to believe in any such sentence, the ambassador grew astonished.

"But you haven't the presumption to go to Brussels after being condemned by the German authorities?"

"In these troubled times anything is possible," I replied. "The services are so overburdened . . ."

"In Belgium, you see, the military people don't know what to believe about you," ventured my questioner.

I was quick to profit by this advantage.

"Naturally," I went on. "I understand. But since you know who I am and what I have done, with a safe-conduct and Your Excellency's word of honour that nothing will happen to me, I will go to Brussels notwithstanding."

"You would not do that?"

"I would."

My cause was won.

It was too late to start then, but next morning at seven o'clock the ambassador had me taken to Brussels in an automobile of his services. At the frontier the chauffeur

turned over the car to a German soldier accompanied by a non-commissioned officer, to whom he gave my safe-conduct. The German showed me the order of the Kommandantur according to which he had to drive me to my own place.

In the avenue Louise, the chauffeur, stopped the car at my request. I wanted to get out and buy a paper, but the non-commissioned officer objected to this, though with much politeness, alleging that I must not go to the trouble myself. As this was the second time such a thing had happened, I surmised that perhaps this excessive consideration might be serving only to mask my actual captivity.

I could get out only to enter my own house. There a lovely spectacle was waiting for me. All my hunting weapons and my collection of antique arms, as well as my automobile, had disappeared. Nevertheless, a remarkably good order reigned. At the entrance to each room an inventory in French and German was tacked to the wall, and this inventory had been drawn up oppositely by the representative of the Commune of Ixelles and by the Kommandantur respectively.

Having been requisitioned by the German authorities, my house was now the residence of the chief physician of the German hospitals of Brussels. My landlord, summoned for the occasion, arrived a few minutes after me. The chief physician begged us to verify the inventories and gave us permission to go over the house. Everything was as simple as that. It was the same at the bank, where I went next to check my account, which had been sequestered. In spite of my apprehensions, the Kommandantur did not demand an interview with me.

It was a question now of getting back to Holland without delay, but also without apparent haste. That same evening I left my excellent landlord. He was not harbouring any resentment toward me for the heavy troubles I had caused him. In company with his wife and his chauffeur he had seen the inside of the German prisons, where they hoped to make him give useful information about me, if not the actual proofs of my guilt. I have often regretted the troubles that I so involuntarily brought to that kindly old man.

The chief physician who then occupied my house was replaced shortly after our meeting. When I saw my landlord some time after, he explained to me how, summoned at two o'clock one morning, he had arrived more dead than alive, expecting to be incarcerated again. The doctor, who was on the point of departure, then had him check up all the

inventories, without omitting the least thing, pointing haughtily to each object with his riding-crop.

"Nothing is missing; everything is in order," he pronounced when the inspection was over. "You can make it known to M. Crozier, and wish him for me good luck for the end of the war."

VI

Upon my return to Rotterdam I found Captain de Lesport. He arrived from Antwerp, where he had kept a long and useless vigil. Lise and Friedman had just given him, one after the other, their explanations of the fate of Jeanne Claessens, as laconically as they had given them to me. He listened, standing very straight. His features revealed nothing of the terrible havoc within his soul. A bearing always scrupulously correct testified that he still kept intact the traditions of elegance of the cavalry corps to which he belonged. However, that evening a practised eye might have discerned in him a certain depression. He drew near to me to say:

"I don't feel well. I ask permission to rest at home for a few days."

His request was so natural that I could not hesitate to grant him, whose energy had never flagged, all the repose he asked. However, I experienced a painful feeling in thinking that his misfortunes had perhaps at last diminished his physical vigour.

The conversation was protracted that evening. Everybody was expressing satisfaction over my trip to Brussels. A warm temperature and a period of very calm weather had succeeded in relaxing our taut nerves. It was close to midnight, and I was conversing intimately with Lise, Bernay, and Deblauw. I happened to speak of Lesport, about whom I had scarcely thought since dinner. The doctor declared himself worried about him. Up to now he had considered our poor friend incapable of halting this side of his eternal rest.

"The poor chap is all alone," he said. "I have a feeling that I ought not to wait until to-morrow to look him over."

We all decided to accompany the doctor, and together we climbed the narrow stairs of the dilapidated house in which Lesport lived. As the door did not open at our redoubled knocks, I pushed against it impatiently. It was so weak and so decayed that the wood had worked loose, and

the bolt did not rest in the lock. Abruptly we found ourselves standing before the corpse of our friend.

The doctor examined it.

" Why in the temple ? " he said, looking up. " I explained once that only in the mouth one ran no risk of missing."

Lise knelt down.

Poor Lesport ! The earth was too inhospitable to him. Unable to struggle longer against his horrible obsession, he had gone to join the martyrs of Visé. By reviving his blood-stained memories the tragic end of the heroes of Hasselt had broken for ever his bruised soul.

But we were in neutral country—in a country where life and death were submitted to the regulations of peace. Wnat were we going to do with the poor remains so as not to attract attention ? There again the knowledge and firmness of decision of Dr. Deblauw were invaluable. Thanks to him and his professional contacts in Holland, we were able to bury decently and without sensation him who deserved all compassion.

Captain de Lesport was the issue of one of the better families of Belgium. After the war we had the consolation of being able to fulfil the formalities necessary to permit his body to repose in the midst of his kindred and in the country for which he had suffered so much.

VII

"THE next time, I want to see these people myself. I will check them up and pay them," I had said to Friedman, to show him my dissatisfaction with certain professional formalities which had not been what I thought it should be.

Thus it was that several days later we found ourselves in that isolated drinking-den on the edge of the road along the frontier coming from the village of Luiksgestel. It was there that I had told Friedman to bring me his guides returning from Germany, whose arrival he had announced by a telegram sent from Maastricht.

After verifying the value of what they had brought us, we paid off the accounts ; and I was continuing to talk with Friedman and Warans, my only two companions in this adventure.

Friedman could not see the numerous goings and comings, for he was sitting opposite me, with his back to the door. I had just noticed a little man who seemed to be sliding into the room with the movements of a weasel. I did not know

him; but his manners contrasted strangely with those of these sturdy roisterers, daredevils every one, who roared here in an atmosphere poisoned by tobacco and alcohol. As this man was scraping past the burly Limburger, I felt my arm abruptly seized by a vigorous fist.

"Devos, from Baarle!" said Jan between his teeth.

"You're not going to let him get away?" I answered, rather uselessly, as it developed.

In the space of a flash two stares met each other: one telling of all the thirst for vengeance a heart could contain; the other spellbound by fear. Armed with a chair, Friedman had already sprung upon his prey, shouting mendaciously:

"It's that dirty rat who denounced us and had all our goods taken by the revenue officers!"

Thus he preserved an even temper in an assemblage whose only point of honour was not to betray a brother.

"Defend yourself!" he cried.

And at once he began to beat his cowardly adversary murderously.

The proprietor of the establishment, a huge colossus of a man, stood behind his bar and called out in his formidable voice a last appeal for peace.

"Don't worry," Friedman shouted to him; "we'll pay for the breakage."

"Well, all right," acceded the other, in the tone of a referee in the ring.

Like a cat attacked by dogs, Devos, with feline suppleness, tried twice to escape. And twice a smuggler threw him back into the arena. Then he jumped up on the bar. The owner of the place shoved him off again. The excitement was now at its height.

"How much did he make you lose by denouncing you?" asked one of the spectators.

"Fifty thousand florins," I answered.

The aversion of all grew with the size of the sum, but there followed a moment of inattention by which our gallows-meat was quick to profit. In the moment it took Friedman to drag out his dagger, the desperate man succeeded in slipping through the company, outdoors, and away. Friedman bounded after him instantly.

If the wretched agent of Baarle had kept his head, he might have been able to escape in the direction of Luiksgestel, but he circled the inn only to hide himself in a kiosk the architecture of which was as rudimentary as its purpose was natural.

Several seconds later I heard from the darkness the crash of collapsing boards. Under the battering he was receiving Devos had fallen just as his refuge tumbled in upon him. Although the situation was tragic enough, I could not help laughing. Presently Friedman emerged and informed me of the speed with which this account had been squared.

"Now they are all paid off."

"Let's go," I said, little caring what might happen as a consequence in this infernal place.

But I did not know now where Warans was. As to Friedman, if he was not agreeing with me, it was because, although I was tired of the spectacle, the moment to leave had not yet come. There remained a final scene to play, and I had to take my role in it. The affair was, in fact, important to us, and I could not wash my hands of it.

I went back into the inn with Friedman. In the dark and while the cabin was falling down upon them, the executioner had plunged his poniard to the hilt between the shoulders of the miscreant. Now in the light he suddenly appeared covered with blood. Every eye was fixed on him. A rough command from the innkeeper came to bring silence. Mine host's wife, small in stature, but redoubtable, glided on padded feet around the tables, closing shutters and leaving no more than a single lamp. Then she gave her attention to Friedman, to whom two smugglers had already hurried. In a moment she was succeeding better than they in effacing the signs of the murder ; while the proprietor, seizing a lantern, was setting out towards the scene of the drama.

Without confusion each one lent a hand in putting everything back into shape or in keeping a look-out around the premises. In this place it was of equal interest to every one that the Dutch police did not appear inopportunely. While some poured pails of water to wash away the tell-tale spots, the others rebuilt the cabin. It was done quickly. In a few minutes all was restored to order. Then we found ourselves face to face with the corpse. Living, he had appeared small ; dead, he was horribly cumbersome.

"Let's go and throw him on the electric wires," urged the man who had shown the most hatred upon learning that the victim had made us lose fifty thousand florins. "He 'burnt' you, let him grill in his turn."

Like the smugglers there, we ourselves had all seen bodies resting on the wires. They really appeared to be on a grill. Shrunken and dried, they gave off a sinister crackling sound. They rapidly became so black that they gave the impression of burnt flesh.

Armed with a chair Friedman had already sprung upon his prey . . . and at once he began to beat his cowardly adversary murderously.

As they debated the course to take, the proprietor, without setting down his lantern, turned over the corpse. Silence fell anew.

" No," he decided, pointing to the gaping wound between the shoulders. " If anybody sees that, we shan't have finished with the police. We must bury him down there in the ravine."

He was referring to that great ravine of the frontier, a sort of ill-defined hinterland between Belgium and Holland, that we used to call the cemetery of sentinels, since not all the sentries who disappeared there were deserters.

The little woman, who was continuing to be on the watch everywhere, opened a decayed door behind a clump of shrubbery. She swiftly distributed garden tools that she took from the shed. The men toiled part of the night, and Devos disappeared from the memory of humanity.

MAN AND WIFE

By

RICHARD BOLESLAVSKI & HELEN WOODWARD

THE German Colonel was to have a birthday. Our men knew all about it. The grape-vine telegraph brought the news, but I never found out how the grape-vine worked, nor did any other officer. There were two hundred yards of deadly ground between us and the Germans. If you wanted to find out how deadly that ground was you could raise a soldier's cap above the trench on the end of a rifle barrel, and hear the swish of bullets playing around it. Nevertheless, gossip and news, and all the little humanities of life managed to filter through. We knew almost as much about the Germans, and they about us, as two neighbouring families in a small provincial town know about each other.

The Colonel's birthday was to come on Thursday. Would we be good enough not to disturb them on that day? They were to have wine and cakes, and one does not like to be shot at while feasting. In return for our politeness they would let us alone some other day.

One day I saw a group of lancers bending over something. They were digging and elbowing one another. As soon as they saw me they fell into confusion. One of the lancers put some small object behind his back.

"What is it, boys?"

They did not answer.

"Hand it over."

The man reluctantly showed a small kite. I should have been in trouble if a higher officer had seen the kite go up.

When I reached for it the lancer said, "Sir Lieutenant, we'll tear it up and throw it away."

"Come on, come on," I commanded, "be sensible."

Smiling, and like a child caught in mischief, he gave me the kite.

It was a clumsy affair made of newspaper, with a home-made envelope attached. Inside was a soiled piece of paper on which the picture of a frivolous young lady was crudely drawn. She was placed in a coarse and insolent attitude toward a rugged German sergeant. Below was written, "Clara gave you the air. Ha! Ha! Ha!" In some secret way they had learned of the sergeant's disastrous experience.

"You shouldn't do this," I said. "Sending messages to the enemy."

"Oh, they play jokes on us," said the men in chorus. "When it's a fight, we fight 'em, but we're not fighting now. We are doing this for fun."

In silence I took the kite away, knowing that anyhow another one would be made and sent across the lines. If I hadn't been an officer I should have sent it myself.

Sometimes I felt that if the officers on both sides should take a holiday the Russians and the Germans would run together like two groups of school children and play games. Play like children until somebody came back and shouted, "Stop it, stop it, don't you know you are in a state of war?"

I am a Pole, and I had joined the Russian army as a volunteer. The Grand Duke Nicholas had put out a manifesto promising freedom to Poland if the Allies won. Polish patriotism told me to go and fight. The Central Powers had done the same thing. They too had promised freedom to Poland, and many Poles were in their ranks. Poles fought against Poles, yet all of them were moved by the same patriotism and the same ideals.

There were two hundred of us in our regiment—the Polish Lancers—a tiny segment of strangers in the vast body of the Russian army, separated even from the main body of Polish infantry legion. During the War, and later during the Revolution, we two hundred wandered in and out of the confusion, always a little detached from all of it. Though we fought and were killed, we were in spirit really onlookers.

We were closer to the Poles in the German army than we were to the Russians in our own.

And we felt toward the Russians a greater enmity than we did for example toward the Austrians; to the Russians we were never brothers. They looked on us as a conquered people. They did not so much dislike us as disregard us.

But I liked the men in the Russian army, and they liked me. Once or twice they had saved me from unpleasant things, and I was grateful. As an officer I had better conditions to live under. If, for instance, there was a puddle of water, a piece of mud and a wet stone for three people to lie on, the officer got the wet stone, the sergeant got the mud and the soldier lay down in the water.

In the autumn of 1916 our regiment of lancers was about half-way between the Black Sea and the Baltic. Behind our swarming lines spread wide, deep-hearted Russia. In Russia's silent soul sombre and gripping thoughts were stirring. In time to come these thoughts were destined to rise and walk

through the land like giants with heavy feet and fingers of steel. They would trample down the ancient order and set up in its place new gods and new leaders.

But that time was still in the future. On our front things were pretty much at a standstill. The duty of officers and men, except for the sad affair of being wounded and the still sadder affair of dying, was an easy routine. There was time to think and talk. It was as though everybody sat down and thought over what had come to pass during these last two years. And as though each one asked, " Where shall I be two years from now ? "

It was funny enough knowing that the German sergeant had had an unfortunate amatory experience. For weeks the lancers talked about it, and laughed heartily, but war laughter, like hysteria, slips easily into shrieks, and after that into dead silence—into endless silent thoughts and endless questions.

About six o'clock one morning our regiment was ordered to stand by. We were to occupy a certain village half an hour away on horseback.

The Germans had taken the village without trouble and held it for two days. It seemed one of those little affairs which happened now and then to remind us that we were at war. The village was meaningless and of no importance to the trench strategy.

At seven o'clock we took the village back. The Germans had retreated. Everything was in order. There were about fifty people there—the aged and the children. We were ready to spend a pleasant evening and to have a good night's sleep.

Later, silent and secret, Russian anti-aircraft artillery arrived in the village. Three guns took hidden positions, covered with canvas which was camouflaged by being painted green, black and yellow to resemble the soil. But the instant they were established in the woods, a heavy fire came from far beyond the German lines. In half an hour the anti-aircraft battery was a ruin.

It was strange. We had come so swiftly. At six we had got our orders. At seven we took the village. One hour. The aircraft guns had come so secretly and had immediately been destroyed. We were suspicious.

Our next job was to find out what was wrong with that village, and we began right then, in the darkness. We searched not only the village itself, but for miles around for hidden wires or connections.

At the bottom of a creek we found an insulated wire. We followed it foot by foot and it led us straight into a barn ;

under the floor of the barn the wire slipped up a wall and into the carcass of a freshly slaughtered calf that was hanging from a beam. Inside the calf was a telephone instrument. The queerest place in the world for a telephone, but there it was.

We saw the whole scheme clearly. The Germans had taken the village and then left it after only two days in order to establish this telephone line.

The barn belonged to a peasant couple; she was a German, he a Pole. They were in their forties, he a little the elder. They were arrested in their beds. There was a court-martial at once.

I was on duty outside the dilapidated little house where the trial was held. It was a dirty and weather-beaten place; its broken windows were covered by boards and horse blankets. I lifted one of the blankets and looked in. Three officers sat at a table on which there were two lighted candles.

Throughout the scene which followed the officers sat with their elbows on the table and their heads on their hands. They seemed heavily weary, like a labourer who has toiled all night, and in the morning, too tired to go home, rests his elbow on the counter of some shabby lunch-room while he eats a dull breakfast.

They questioned the couple. It was unnecessary, because the officers, and everybody else, knew what must happen.

"How old are you?" "Where were you born?" "What nationality?" And so until the last tragic question: "Guilty or not guilty?"

The man made no answer. He hung his head as in shame. But before the presiding officer had a chance to put that last short question to the woman she burst into furious speech. She was too excited to stick to one language. Polish, Russian, and German poured from her in a torrent of fury and hate. She had been a Silesian girl and had married a Pole, she said. Probably she had loved him, but she had not loved the country to which he had brought her. Her German family had suffered from the war: father, brothers, all had been killed. She talked for ten minutes, cursing the officers before her, cursing the whole army, the Russian Emperor, the world.

The ritual of the court martial requires a straight answer, guilty or not guilty. Not that it makes any difference which you say. Now and again when she paused in her high-pitched, sharp incoherence to take a breath, the calm voice of the Major broke in with his question.

"Guilty or not guilty?"

No answer ; only more raving.

" Guilty or not guilty ? " A monotonous question, uttered with the mechanical insistence of a phonograph.

The woman drew a long breath, but she used it in mere babbling, in words that came so fast that they ran into a stream of animal-like sounds.

" Guilty or not guilty ? "

Peasant fashion, her husband nudged her with his elbow, to say whether she was guilty or not. At last she seemed to understand, paused, then shouted :

" Yes, yes, I am guilty ; but no more guilty than you are. You who killed all mine. I wanted to do it, and I would do it again."

By midnight the candles had guttered down into fantastic forms of melted tallow. The room was full of dark shadows and greasy smoke. The Major half turned his head and looked into the eyes of the officer on his right, then shifted his eyes towards the officer on his left. Two eyelids dropped. He wrote on a protocol.

" Guilty."

The officers rose.

As the guards were taking them away, the woman kept on talking. Her husband tried to calm her with soothing words. If she heard him she paid no attention. The woman's voice melted into darkness, but after the couple had passed out of sight I still heard her.

Next time I saw them it was six o'clock in the morning. Dawn was barely breaking and a fine mist was falling. The platoon marched from the village across a field, the woman and the man in the middle. It was hard walking. The men's heavy boots sank into the soft ground.

We stopped at a small ravine under tender birches, which looked so tall, so sadly flexible and young in that light morning breeze, like the shimmering shadow of trees reflected in water. No one spoke a word. Silence loomed larger. During the ceremony of execution which followed silence became more positive and fuller of meaning. Commands were given in a low tone, almost in a whisper. The Adjutant read the decision of the court. He either had a cold or he was shivering. I stood ten yards away. I could not hear a word. Probably nobody did.

The man seemed terribly ashamed. He stood with his head down, and his head was bare. He looked like the portraits of Nietzsche. He had a sharp nose, aquiline, with a bushy moustache. His hands were red—the rough hands of a ploughman—and he kept clasping and unclasping them. I thought

I saw tears on his face, but perhaps they were drops of rain. He did not look as though he were crying.

The branches of the trees were dripping with fog and mist.

The woman was all through with life. Certain people die when they want to die although their bodies continue to function and legally they are considered alive. After the tirade which she had kept up far into the night, she had died inside completely. We who had seen so many corpses knew that lifeless expression of open eyes which look steadily into one point. But if you put yourself at that point you realise that though looking at you they are not seeing you. She was looking and not seeing anything. Between her lips was a bit of straw which she kept chewing. Over her head she wore a big shawl. She held it firmly with her hands at her bosom. The air was chilly.

The sentence read, the Sergeant came up to her and said something in a low voice which I could not hear, but I knew he said, " If you want to pray you can have five minutes." There was no priest. The Sergeant was preoccupied with the idea that there was no priest. He seemed disturbed that this detail was irregular. No priest. I could see that this thought lay heavy within him. Do not the army regulations say : " If the condemned expresses a desire to have the last rites performed by a priest of his or her religion, the request should be granted " ? But there was no priest. How could we go on ? The Sergeant was troubled.

The woman was as silent as a statue. Her stream of words had dried up. She was through with living.

There was an awkward pause. We did not know whether they wanted to pray. We did not want to disturb them, yet we could not move away. Some of the soldiers started to stamp their feet, either to get warm or from nervous impatience.

The Sergeant came and stood by me awkwardly for a long, voiceless minute. At last he said foolishly, " Are your quarters all right, sir ? "

" Yes," I said, " comfortable enough."

The Adjutant looked at his wrist-watch about ten times. I don't know whether he waited the whole five minutes. I suspect only three.

The two people were not praying. They were doing nothing, standing and waiting.

The Adjutant nodded to me.

I nodded to the Sergeant.

The Sergeant exaggeratedly clicked his heels and stiffened in salute. This was peculiar, because he was a lazy fellow

who thought that any officer was lucky to get him as a sergeant. Stiffly he turned about face, marched eight or ten yards from the Lieutenant to the couple, standing quiet and alone, and said something.

The man nodded a couple of times and, very shy and shrinking, gave his hand to his wife. She turned her head with a slow, indolent motion. The dawn had widened into day, and I could see her face distinctly : her bushy eyebrows first, and then the line of her narrow, flat mouth. Wrinkles centred all around that tight mouth like the lines of a halo. Her face was the exact colour of the dirty snow which lay here and there under foot.

There was no pain in her face, no fear. Only the calm movement of lips still chewing the straw. She moved her head slowly, slowly as though it were some one else's head and she were turning it on a heavy pivot, and fixed her gaze on her husband. She did not give him her hand. He held his outstretched toward her for a few seconds. His back was to me and I could see how his shoulders began to bend and get round, how they began to shake, and then, how more and more strongly they shook. Like a shamed boy, he humped his head into her shoulder and sobbed slowly, not loud, but uh-uh-uh, like the noise of a man who is chopping down a big tree and hitting the axe on the wood.

Every movement, every word, seemed as though produced by a slow-motion movie-camera.

The deep, mournful weeping of the man did not change the woman's expression. She stood erect and quiet, his head resting awkwardly on her shoulder. She kept her head turned in his direction. She did not look down at him, but straight over his head, through me, and into nothing. As she had turned her head around toward him, she now turned it away.

With dead calm, she started toward a little step-ladder clumsily made of four broken boards. It stood under the branch of a tree.

As she walked away from his head that was resting on her shoulder the man lost his balance a little and moved after her a step or two. He began to clean his nose, still sobbing.

A soldier from a Russian infantry regiment had volunteered to be the hangman in return for a few days of extra leave. A middle-aged man, a common farmer, he had a wife and five children, this soldier, and you would never have expected cruelty from him. He had probably hanged a couple of horse-thieves in his life, and so knew how to do the job. No one had asked him to.

He went up the improvised step-ladder, six feet high, and waited for the woman to follow. She tried to climb, holding on by one hand which she brought out from under her shawl. She couldn't manage it. She tried the other hand. It didn't work.

In a soft voice the soldier hangman at the top of the ladder gave her friendly advice. "Take your shawl off, sister." The woman did. She had on a black petticoat and nothing else but a shirt. She and her husband had been caught at eight o'clock at night. They had already been in bed, and had had no chance to dress. Through her shirt of rough canvas we saw her bent, big-boned shoulders. A woman who had worked hard all her life, the stark heavy work of a woman on a peasant farm. Her arms, bare below the elbow, were dark and worn, and her hands had square, peasant palms and rheumatic fingers. She came up to the level on which the soldier stood, holding her shirt closed in front with her two hands.

Before I could realise what was happening the soldier made a quick movement around her head, then jumped with a loud thud on to the ground. In the next moment with a strong kick he knocked the ladder out from under her legs. Like a bird lifting its wings she flew in an almost graceful gesture, her arms up in the air, and started to move them toward her throat. Half-way they fell down. She began to whirl around on the rope, three times to the right, two and a half left, two right, one and a half left. All that time convulsions were shooting through her body as though she were laughing. Her head was bent down and I could not see her eyes. Her mouth was suddenly wide open. All this swift and without a pause.

I could not take my eyes from the hanging figure which turned this way and that in the air. I had no emotions, for the emotions, like the hands, become calloused in time. In this second year of war, I knew there was no help. One could do nothing. The whole procedure was sanctified by humanity, by man's law, by military law and, for all I knew, by God's law. If it were not I who was here it would be some one else. It was my hard luck to be here on this particular day.

Suddenly I saw three lancers passing me. Mechanically my eyes followed them. The husband was lying on the ground without movement; he had collapsed, perhaps fainted, perhaps he was dead.

The lancers lifted him as gently as they could, carried him to the same branch from which his wife was hanging. Two yards from her another noose hung waiting for him. The three

lancers had to hold him while the infantry soldier hangman put the noose around his neck. When they let go, his feet did not hold him up. He hung tied by the neck with his legs at a queer angle on the ladder. Quickly again the executioner jumped and kicked out the ladder. But I think the man was already dead.

Nobody said a word.

We started to march back slowly across the sodden field. There was no sound save that of marching feet. I had a feeling that the men who had stayed in the village looked at us as though they thought us unfortunate human beings because we had to walk through that mud before breakfast.

My chum, Lieutenant Chmiel, stuck his head through a window and shouted across the street, "Come on, hurry up, father, the sausages are ready."

And so they were.

After breakfast everything was normal. All had passed in half an hour. A few days afterward I had almost forgotten it. A year later that scene came to me again vividly, as in a lighted picture. I don't know why, but it stood in my memory, a vision so clear that it was clearer than reality.

In two days we had settled our offices and quarters, our stables and kitchens. We had a place where the officers came to play cards and repeat the same obscene stories that we all knew. Everybody was sick of those dreary yarns, but no one thought of inventing new ones. The old ones did just as well.

THE "AMERICAN COLONEL" AND HOW WE SAVED THE LIFE OF THE KING OF ENGLAND

By

EDWIN T. WOODHALL

My association with the American Secret Service began early in April, 1917.

It was at the Gare des Voyageurs, Le Havre. The American Intelligence Department at that time was new to France and its system of counter-espionage. In consequence, the British Intelligence deputed selected men to work with, advise, and aid the Americans until they had thoroughly entrenched themselves and commenced active operations.

They soon mastered the intricacies of counter-espionage in their thorough, practical, business-like way. I have the highest regard for American methods in espionage. I liked their clean-cut method of elimination. They always appeared so cool, so skilful and careful.

As master in the game of human intrigue, where it is check and counter-check, I suppose the greatest detective or Secret Service man in the world is the Frenchman. His temperament, if he has the trained mind of the investigator, lends itself to such things. He is highly imaginative.

The American is perhaps inclined to be a little too confident. The Englishman—not confident enough. However, as Allies, they all worked well together, as I found in my multifarious duties.

To return to my story.

The "Five o'clock Rapide" train was waiting in Le Havre Junction, ready to take the boat passengers from England, via Paris, to different parts of Europe and other countries.

American activity prevailed upon all sides. There were American civilians, officers, and soldiers to be seen everywhere, many of them on "short leave" to Paris and other places. By the new American Army Order only those of the fighting forces in uniform were allowed to travel on the railway provided they possessed the Railway Military Movement

Order. Non-military American citizens, of course, carried passports.

The crush through the barrier at my control on this particular day, 28th April, 1917, was very heavy. My French and Belgian colleagues had a busy time grappling with the scores of passports thrust into their hands by anxious and clamouring passengers loudly protesting at delay and eager to obtain seats.

I noticed one of the French detectives take an American passport from a tall, upright soldier dressed in the uniform of a Colonel in the United States Infantry.

Actually, it was not his place to interrogate British and American subjects when an English or American Intelligence Police agent was present. But we often did things of this description for each other, if the pressure of people was very heavy. Everything had to be done in a rush. I always considered this to be one of the great defects in our passport control. Important people did not like to be kept waiting, but I made an iron rule I would keep *anybody* waiting if I had the slightest doubt as to their credentials.

Somehow, that American officer passing through my control on a passport, instead of a Military Movement Order, seemed out of order. It was not consistent with their own orders that had been laid down. There was an American Intelligence agent present, so I was at a loss as to what to do.

Fortunately, one of the English Intelligence Police came to my assistance, Sergeant Robert Hadfield, an alert and shrewd member of our department; asking him to take over my control, I went in search of the American officer.

A long train, packed with civilians, and military and naval officers of all ranks and grades, with porters pushing and struggling along the narrow corridors in every direction, is no easy matter to search. I only had seven minutes to find my man. However, there he was with other officers in the dining-car, seated for tea. I had three minutes left. The position was very awkward. I was in civilian clothes addressing American officers in uniform. But I had to take the chance.

"Gentlemen," I said, "I am sorry to trouble you. I am a sergeant of the British Intelligence Police. I am responsible to the American Army Intelligence for the bona-fides of all their rank and file passing through the civilian barrier control of this station. Will you all be so kind as to produce your Movement Orders?"

They might have been offensive, these American officers, but, with good grace, permits were produced.

Two minutes left. My suspect American, however, was playing for time; he said his Movement Order was in his valise. This only tended to increase my suspicion.

"Sorry, sir, but I *must* see it." He demurred. I ran to the nearest door.

The Chef de Gare with watch in hand was on the point of signalling to the Chief Train Conductor to start the train. My French colleague came running up. "Keep the express waiting, I have a 'suspect,'" I shouted from the door.

Meantime the other American officers, seeing my predicament, came to my rescue. They brought the "suspect" into the corridor. He had only an *American Civilian Passport.* At once I ordered him off the train, snatching at his automatic revolver holster and whipping out the gun. The photograph on the passport had been tampered with. I could see it was a forgery.

He left in my company—and the train roared away to Paris.

Now here was an awkward position. In the presence of many people, I, an English non-commissioned officer in civilian clothes, had hauled off the train a colonel of the United States Army.

Yet my long experience of handling passports had made me almost an expert. I instinctively knew that the owner and the passport were not identical.

Suddenly there was a commotion on the platform. Hurrying towards me were two French detectives of the Paris Sûreté, a French officer and some soldiers. I recognised the officer as one of the Camp Commandants of the German Officers' Prison Compound. "Good work, Woodhall," they shouted as they saw my capture.

The "American colonel" was a prisoner of war, a very daring and brave type of Prussian Cavalry Guard officer, who had resided in England before the War.

He had only escaped at three o'clock that same afternoon. His method was a clever one. A stolen American uniform, and his knowledge of English nearly won the day. But his accomplice or accomplices forgot one important detail; his travelling papers. It was just as easy to forge a Movement Order as to forge a stolen civilian passport. In fact, much easier. His high rank would have enabled him to pass easily.

What his intentions were is hard to say. He might have been making for Germany via Geneva, in Switzerland. On the other hand, he might have been going to make a tour of the American lines and general dispositions. If so, his mission would have been indeed dangerous to the Allied

cause. Equally, he might have set his mind upon some act of sabotage, such as the blowing up of one of the French munition factories, or the placing of a time-bomb in a train packed with thousands of English, American, or French troops, in fact, many motives may be attributed to his escape. However, his capture brought to light a most ingenious plot at the German officers' prison compound, and three weeks later I was privileged to aid the French Intelligence in breaking up the whole plot. I assumed the rôle of a crane-driver on the quay, among a large company of German officers and men, and enjoyed a thrilling adventure.

. . . .

During the War, the King made several trips to France to visit Headquarters, hospitals and the battlefields.

Needless to say these journeys were a source of very great anxiety to the General Staff and all concerned with the King's safety. Every precaution was taken to guard His Majesty. A selected detective, generally from the ranks of the Intelligence Police, was always attached to him as a personal guard. As bad luck would have it, during these visits there were nearly always some unpleasant incident, and I remember one occasion when a plot to assassinate His Majesty was defeated in the nick of time by the sagacity and intelligence displayed by a private in a Scottish regiment.

Upon that occasion the King was staying at a château which was used sometimes as a temporary headquarters by Sir Douglas Haig. At the time of the King's visit the British Commander-in-Chief was established on his famous train in a siding only a short distance from the château, and here His Majesty dined and lunched frequently.

It was arranged for the King to visit certain hospitals and to review certain divisions of troops newly arrived in France. On the day before the big review word came to the Inter-Allied Secret Service that there was obviously a serious leakage of information. The enemy were getting most accurate intelligence as to the movements of troops in the vicinity of the place where the King intended to hold his review.

Special efforts were made to trace the leakage, and at the request of my Chief of Intelligence, I went down to the suspected district and made a few independent inquiries. After careful work I learned of an old Flemish woman who seemed to be living far more comfortably than the present hard circumstances warranted to one in the battle zones. I detailed one of my best men to watch her. After nightfall he saw her leave her cottage and make her way along a shell-

torn path to a ruined château. She entered and he followed. He had two assistants at hand, and as soon as the old woman came out of the building, he arrested her. Accompanied by one man, he made his way up the stairs leading to a shell-broken turret.

Partly demolished by long-range gunfire, the steps were unsafe, and great care had to be exercised lest he fell through a hole in the side. He neared the top. Twice he heard the hoot of an owl, but paid no attention. He could see the stars above him. He was perhaps seven feet from the top when a vicious crack, a flash and the heat of flame instinctively made him duck. He saw a pair of legs and grabbed at them. *Crash* ! His assailant fell down the stairs. A groan. My man struck a match. He saw lying beneath him a young, thick-set man, unconscious, and bleeding freely from a wound on the side of the head. Calling his comrade by name several times he received no answer. Striking another match, he saw by the light another body—it was his comrade. He was dead—shot through the heart !

The unconscious man was searched and an identity disc of a German Infantry regiment round his neck revealed him as a spy in disguise. A search of the top tower soon revealed the presence of a wireless signalling apparatus, and on his person were found details of the King's movements for the next three days.

The spy was shot following court-martial.

That is why the King's tour was suddenly changed.

LOVE AND ESPIONAGE

By

LIEUT. A. BAUERMEISTER

Lieutenant Bauermeister served on the Staff of the German G.H.Q. as Intelligence Officer. After the Russian Revolution of 1917, the German Intelligence Service was very active behind the Russian lines spreading anti-Allied propaganda.

ONE of my best agents during the war was a Pole named Felix, who was fanatically anti-Russian. Very efficient, too, was his charming fiancée, Genia Josifovna. Over a long period these two brought me priceless information. They often penetrated not only to Russian headquarters, but far beyond. I will now relate a particularly daring adventure of theirs.

We had intercepted messages which revealed that big convoys of ammunition, destined for a new offensive, were being sent *via* Baranovitchi, where Russian H.Q. were then situated.

To prevent the arrival of these munitions I decided to have the railway line blown up at a point nor far from Baranovitchi, and I asked Felix whether he would undertake the job. "Of course," he answered; "why not? I'll take Genia with me, as we shall have to carry a lot of stuff with us." I made inquiries which showed that the place selected for the explosion was a good one.

Equipped with dynamite and all other necessary gear we drove to the front just as dusk was falling. We had, of course, to drive very carefully lest we and the car were all blown up together. I had already informed the regimental commander in the sector concerned that I should be passing agents through his front that night.

I had the car stopped at regimental H.Q., a cosy dug-out in a dense wood. When I told the C.O. what was afoot he would not at first believe it. "And the pretty little lady is going, too?" asked the bewildered colonel, his gaze lingering on the charming features of Genia.

"She will certainly go with her fiancé," I rejoined; "and I haven't the least doubt that she has been over there many a time before. If you have an engineer officer handy,

Colonel, it would be a great help to the enterprise if he would give my agent some technical hints."

"That shall be done at once." The colonel told his adjutant to call an officer of engineers who was in the neighbourhood. When he arrived he approved in all respects my plan, which aimed at blowing up the line as a train passed over it. An earlier explosion would probably give the game away by alarming the enemy. My plan, therefore, was adhered to.

Just before 9 p.m. we were in the trenches. The colonel came with us, "just to see for once how agents are passed through the lines"—as he put it. For the last time I repeated my instructions. The first trains were due to pass the selected point shortly before 5 a.m., that was to say, in about eight hours' time. The journey to the railway would take five hours Felix thus had ample time to place his charges carefully in position. Genia would remain some distance away to guard him against surprise.

I conducted Felix and Genia to the last advanced post. Apart from the howling of the wind, it was deathly silent in the advanced sector. With a firm handgrip the pair took leave of us and I saw them both vanish into the darkness. I remained for about an hour with the outpost, to hear whether they had got through. Once across the lines they ran little risk.

"They must be plucky souls," said the sentry, who for the first time in his life had seen a spy crossing into enemy territory. "It's true the Russian front in these marshes is thinly held, but still. . . ."

It had been arranged that Felix and Genia should return on the following night by the same route, and I ordered the sentry to tell his company commander that on no account were they to be fired at. I repeated this request to the regimental C.O. on my way back. "That's understood,' he replied. "I wish them luck and hope they get back safely."

Next day, about noon, I went as usual to the general staff office. There I found a message to the effect that "the matter has been settled." One of the staff officers handed me an aviator's report which had just come in. It told us that at the point on the railway which I had indicated a locomotive lay right across the rails, blocking a stretch of line that was of vital importance to the Russians. "A daring fellow, indeed!" said the staff captain, shaking his head.

And then, just before midnight, I was called up by the regimental commander at the front. "Your agent and the pretty girl are back again. They are with me in the dug-out.

They would like to speak with you personally on the 'phone. They say the railway is blown up. According to him the locomotive is lying right across the rails."

"Quite correct, Sir," I answered. "The aviators have already reported it."

Two hours later I fetched Felix and Genia from Colonel K'.s dug-out. The place was packed with inquisitive people who wanted to get a glimpse of the daring agents who had "brought off" this audacious coup. Felix had to tell his story again and again. The new day had dawned before we at length left the dug-out behind us.

"Now, Genia Josifovna, how did it go off?" I asked the pretty little Pole when we were in the car. "Weren't you really frightened at all?"

"No, not in the slightest. The place was simply made for us. Not a soul in sight. When we heard the explosion and the locomotive was thrown right across the rails we ran away. For about an hour we kept on through the forest in the direction of the front. Then we hid in a thick covert and went to sleep. When dusk fell again we resumed our march. And now we are here—and I'm not a bit tired!"

II

With the exception of a certain Russian general staff captain, Felix was my best and most daring agent. At the time of his death I had worked with him two and a half years. Of course, I paid him, for he could not live on air and love alone. But his principal motive was not money, but revenge. During the revolution of 1905 the Russians had hanged his father for distributing revolutionary literature among the soldiers.

"Please look upon me not as a paid spy, but as an employee," he often said to me.

One day the signal officer with our army came to see me. He told me that for about two weeks past a new enemy wireless station had been heard, and by his reckoning it must be at Odessa. He presented me with a number of intercepts, which I deciphered in his presence. They were all, without exception, addressed to the commissariat officer of General Brussiloff's south-western army group in Galicia, and they dealt with equipment, commissariat, and kindred matters. I inferred from these messages that they related to new troop formations which were to be dovetailed into General Brussiloff's army group. The chief of staff of our army, to

whom I submitted the matter, shared my view entirely. The sudden appearance of formidable and fresh enemy reinforcements on the Austrian front would be decidedly unpleasant, for the Austrian army was already being hard pressed by the Russians.

After a lengthy consultation with Felix I decided to send Genia to Odessa.

If it were true that new branches of the higher staff had been established there it should be possible with a little skill for Genia as a woman, and an exceedingly attractive woman at that, to make friends with officers and high military officials, and thus to learn more than Felix could hope to do. Apart from discovering what these new troops were, it was of capital importance for us to learn in what area they were to be used. The private soldiers would naturally be ignorant of their destination, but not so the staff officers. And that was Genia's second task: to find out which front these new troops were destined for.

Genia, furnished with cash for her journey, and I took to the front. It was the same place from which, together with Felix, she had crossed the lines to blow up the railway at Baranovitchi. Colonel K. was genuinely delighted to see us again and entertained us to the best of his ability. Then he escorted us to the trenches and shook hands with Genia, wishing her the best of luck.

"This time, Colonel, I shall not be back so soon as on the previous occasion. It will be from ten to twelve days before I return," she said smilingly, as she climbed over the trench parapet. I took her to the foremost post and listened intently. There was dead silence all round us; nothing stirred.

"I must make haste while everything is so quiet, Herr Lieutenant. As we were coming back last time a Russian suddenly fired off a Verey light, and unless we had instantly thrown ourselves to the ground we must have been caught," she told me.

"I shall stay here with the sentry for about an hour," I said, "in case anything happens. After that, of course, we shall shoot. If all is quiet I shall then go back to staff headquarters. Well, keep a stiff upper lip, and the best of good fortune!"

So quiet was the night that we might have been living in profoundest space. Far and wide, not a shot nor any other noise broke the silence. All life seemed to have faded away or to be sunk in slumber.

"Just like manœuvre time," remarked the sentry.

Eleven days later Colonel K. called me up. "Your little

lady is here again. You had better come quickly; she has very important news for you."

Her report was indeed almost incredible.

When I reached the dug-out she almost fell on my neck with joy. "This time I have really brought you something fine: in Odessa the formation of the new 7th Army under General Scherbatsheff has been completed. Four army corps. I have written down the numbers of all the regiments, and in four weeks this new army will entrain for the front, to join the south-west army group of General Brussiloff."

"What a splendid girl you are!" I exclaimed in genuine admiration. "You'll get extra pay for this."

"No, no! I didn't mean that," she pouted. "You don't know what a reward it is to me to be able to give you great pleasure. I won't accept any extra pay. Is Felix at home?"

I was sorry to have to disappoint her. "Not at the moment. He's organising a new carrier pigeon station 'over there.' But he'll be back in about four days' time."

It was already after midnight when we reached my quarters, a cottage on the outskirts of the village. Suddenly Genia clutched my arm. "Oh! Lieutenant, quick. There—there he is!" She stepped forward fearfully "That's the man who followed me, the man I told you about." Drawing my revolver I sprang into the shadow, but it was already too late. The fellow vanished into the darkness, as though the earth had swallowed him up. With my servant and the two military police who were quartered with me I searched the neighbourhood thoroughly, but in vain. Nor did we find him next day. He had disappeared without trace.

Genia, who had previously been so merry and had laughed so heartily, suddenly became another woman. As she sat opposite to me she was deadly pale, and her hands trembled. "That was he," she said more to herself than to me. "I know that one day he'll keep his word and destroy me. Just because I repulsed him. After all, one can't love to order. Oh! how I loathe that fellow! He has sworn to be revenged on Felix. 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,' he said. But I'm going on fighting," she added, with grim resolution. "One of us must go under, he or I."

When poor little Genia said this she certainly did not foresee how soon the ghastly decision was to be made.

For long we sat together in silence, until weariness overcame her utterly. "It's nerves," she remarked. "First ten days 'over there' and then to see that beast here in the darkness."

I took Genia by the arm and led her home.

III

THE following morning Genia gave me an account of her trip to Odessa. As early as the second day she had got into conversation with a General Staff colonel in a café, and that evening he took her to the theatre.

"He was terribly in love," she laughed; "and on that I based my plan. It was perfectly clear that he would tell me everything if I questioned him cleverly enough. In order to gain his confidence I told him a most moving story. I had fled from Warsaw when the Russian troops retreated. Then I had stayed in Kieff until recently, when I had come to Odessa to find some distant relations. But in the meantime these relations had moved to Moscow. As I had no longer enough money to pay my fare to Moscow, I had perforce remained in Odessa."

"Very good, very clever," said I approvingly. At this Genia blushed—either from joy at my praise or because, as I knew from a dozen signs, she set great store on my good opinion of her, and was rather ashamed of the part she had played in this venture, seeing that she was a girl of good family and exceptional education. Later on, however, I was able to solve this little mystery. It must not be forgotten that here was no case of a woman plunging into the gravest risks from sordid motives. On the contrary, Genia was a gently-bred girl, who was actuated in everything she did—as I knew even then—by her love for Felix and, still more, her desire for revenge on the Russians.

"Next, he wanted to give me money," she continued after a brief pause. "He hadn't the faintest suspicion of me. I accepted the hundred roubles which he pressed into my hand, and then—please understand, Lieutenant, that I dared not incur a breath of suspicion—I gave him the address of the modest boarding-house where I was staying."

"Splendid," I observed. "It all sounds like a novel from the life."

"So it is. I was really sorry for the poor Colonel. It's not a pleasant thing to play with emotions. But hear me further. Next morning the proprietress knocked at my door, and there stood a soldier, the Colonel's servant, with an enormous bouquet of flowers, several boxes of sweetmeats, and a note. The Colonel wrote that after coming off duty he would call and take me out to supper. After that we met every day and each time I learned more, until at last I had everything I wanted."

"When I look at you now," I exclaimed in genuine admiration, "my heart grieves for the Colonel!"

All of a sudden Genia became quite frivolous, though her mood did not strike me as completely genuine. "When I think about it now I have to laugh frightfully," she cried. "It was the evening before I left Odessa—and on that evening he made me an offer of marriage. To avert suspicion I accepted him. While we were celebrating our 'betrothal' I was pondering my plans for escaping. To lull him into security I told him that I would like to travel to Moscow on the following day to tell my relations of my engagement. He took the parting badly. On the other hand, he was terribly thrilled that I was taking the matter seriously. 'I shall be back in a week and then we can get married,' I consoled him.

"Of course he took me to the station and bought me a ticket for Moscow, and gave me three hundred roubles to cover my expenses in Moscow and pay the return fare. It was a most 'moving' farewell. Two hours later I left the train, tore the Moscow ticket into small pieces, and boarded a train that was going to the front. Well, that's all there is to it, and now I'm here!"

To the best of my knowledge, this was the only case in the whole war in which a woman not merely reported the formation of a new army in all its details, but named the sector of the front to which it was to be despatched.

Genia Josifovna refused to accept extra pay. The very suggestion seemed to upset her. Soon, however, she was as merry and light-hearted as before. She seemed even to have forgotten yesterday's encounter with the man who had followed her. "But if you were to offer me some of your official port, I shouldn't refuse," she laughed.*

IV

Two days later Felix returned from his "carrier pigeon mission," which he had very skilfully performed. He now stood in my room, a sort of turret chamber, and kept gazing out of the window while he made his report.

"Quick, come to the window, Lieutenant!" he suddenly exclaimed. I sprang to my feet and was with him in a couple of strides.

"Do you see that man over there in the brown cloak, with

* I always carried a case of wine with me. This wine often loosened the tongues of the most taciturn, and by its aid I was able to bring to justice some of the enemy's most stubborn spies.

the sporting cap pulled over his eyes? A while ago he was following me. I could swear that I have seen him 'over there' among the Russians."

Through the curtain I saw the man look into a shop window and then pace slowly away.

"It is he!" Felix cried in excitement.

"Kramm, come quickly!" I shouted into the next room. An instant later the military policeman stood by me at the window. "Do you see that man in the brown cloak standing over there?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Good, then show me what you can do. Bring the fellow to me in ten minutes. Have you got handcuffs?"

"Yes—always," and he motioned to his right-hand pocket as he made for the door. Kramm unobtrusively sidled across the road in a diagonal direction. As we were able to observe from the window, the man in the brown cloak did not turn round and had obviously failed to notice that Kramm, who as usual wore mufti, had left my house. Again the man stood, hands in pockets, before a shop window. From my corner window I was able to survey the whole street and follow all the proceedings. Kramm slowly approached his victim. Now they were in conversation, and then the man in the brown cloak swiftly raised his right hand.

"Did you see how he put his hand to his mouth?" Felix exclaimed.

"Yes, Felix, but that won't help him much."

Kramm now seized his man with the skill born of long practice. Two soldiers who were passing sprang to his aid; but the man put up a fierce resistance and the group fell struggling to the ground. When they rose the man in the brown cloak wore handcuffs. Five minutes later he stood before me.

"Why have I been arrested and handcuffed?" he demanded, speaking with a Yiddish accent.

"Why? Because you are a Russian agent! Kramm, bind his feet so that he can only take short steps. Then put him in the cellar and stay with him until I send for you!"

I now rang up a staff surgeon, who was well known to me, and briefly recounted the circumstances. "All right," was his answer. "I'll send you at once by my servant such powerful purgatives and emetics that in twenty minutes at the latest you'll have the *corpus delicti*—that I'll answer for!" laughed the doctor.

With these medicaments in my pocket I proceeded to the cellar. Sitting in a corner was the prisoner, bound hand and

foot, while the military policeman paced up and down. I took the latter aside and asked him, in a whisper, whether the fellow had swallowed anything. "Yes," was the reply; "there's no doubt about that."

I then turned to the spy. "If you have a clear conscience," I told him, "you will freely take these two medicines which I have here. If you refuse you will have to take them by force."

"Really! Well, my conscience is clear enough, but in spite of that I'm not going to take the stuff. No doubt you want to poison me."

I went close up to him and stared in his face.

"While you were outside in the street you swallowed some little object. And I would like to have this little thing as proof, so that I can stick you up against the wall."

"Swallowed? I? Some little object?" stammered the fellow, who was white as chalk and stared at me with glassy eyes in which was reflected the fear of death. "I have swallowed nothing," he added in a toneless voice.

I rang the bell and two more military policemen entered the room. "The three of you ought to be able to manage it. And when it's over bring what you find to me upstairs."

With these words I left them. The staff surgeon had not exaggerated. The medicines certainly were powerful. Ten minutes later the military policeman came to me and laid on the table a small aluminium capsule. As we opened it a tiny slip of paper fell out. It bore a stamp and read as follows:

H.Q. 4TH ARMY

ESPIONAGE DIVISION.

This was the usual credential given to agents to facilitate their passage through the Russian front. When I showed the paper to the man he denied nothing further. "Now I shall be shot, I suppose?"

"Naturally," I answered. "Every country at war punishes spying with death."

"But if I give away the other men who were left behind in the town by the Russian spy service, will you then spare my life?"

"Certainly," I replied; "but only, you understand, if we establish the truth of what you tell us."

"But what guarantee have I got that you really won't shoot me after all?"

"The word of a Prussian officer."

At this he relapsed once more into Yiddish dialect, exclaiming: "*A Wort vonä preissische Offizier is gut!*" He then told us, without the slightest hesitation or moral scruple, the names and addresses of four other agents in the town.

"And what's your pass-word?"

"The pass-word is 'Wyeter.'" (Russian word meaning "wind.")

These four men whom their colleague had betrayed were taken by a method which I had often employed to good purpose. Besides my civilian clothes I always had in my trunk a Russian officer's uniform. As I spoke Russian fluently and without an accent, my disguise was never once penetrated in all the four years of war. Many an agent who had been repeatedly interrogated without result was led to betray himself by my fluent Russian combined with the officer's uniform.

I now gave Felix the secret pass which we had taken from our prisoner and sent him to interview the first agent of the four.

"I have a particularly important job for you," said Felix, displaying the pass. The latter had its effect. "An officer of the Russian general staff wants to speak with you at once, and I have orders to take you to him."

Quite unsuspectingly the agent came with him.

When the spy entered my room I unbuttoned my civilian cloak and let him see the Russian uniform. Then I asked for his "report." When this was forthcoming and the man stood self-convicted of espionage, I pressed a bell. Before the spy could open his mouth he was seized by three military police officers. Three times was the scene repeated, and in less than five hours I had them all under lock and key, ripe for the court martial. I then called up the commandant and asked for four soldiers to take charge of the prisoners.

Then I went down to the cellar where the four-fold traitor in the brown cloak was detained, and told him that as his confession had been verified I would keep my word. He would not be shot but interned in a prisoners' camp for the rest of the war.

"And what's going to happen to the four agents you arrested?" he asked hoarsely.

"That's a matter for the court martial, but after what you have told us they are pretty sure to be shot."

"Shot?" he repeated, with lips pressed together.

"Yes, shot. But why do you ask? They won't know whom they have to thank for it," I said with righteous disgust. "Better four than your own precious self."

He was clearly breaking down. A military policeman conducted him to the commandant's quarters, whence on the following day he would be despatched to a prisoners' camp.

Next morning a soldier who unlocked the cell hastily stepped back. There from an iron grating hung the man in the brown cloak, his features terribly convulsed and tinged with blue.

He who, out of cowardly fear of the rifle bullets of the firing squad, had sent four of his comrades to their deaths just to save his own precious life had now executed himself.

V

During the war, carrier pigeons on the Eastern front played a not unimportant *rôle*, busily and accurately conveying many a momentous message. It must always be a source of wonder how these little creatures fly straight as an arrow and with unfailing certainty to their homing-point.

I had provided myself with a number of these birds, and what we now wanted was to find a reliable agent far behind the Russian front who from time to time would despatch the pigeons with important news. Still more difficult would it be to get the birds across to the agent. It would mean taking them right through the front.

Even if the messenger contrived to penetrate the front at night with a small basket of pigeons, his troubles would by no means be over. Anywhere near the front a man carrying a parcel at once attracted notice, however harmless he might appear. The messenger would have to be uncommonly smart, and he must, of course, take a circuitous route. This, then, was the most difficult part of our task: to get the pigeons across the lines.

"I know of two absolutely trustworthy fellows who will help me to take the twenty pigeons to the other side," Felix assured me. "Of course, we shall keep to the woods and the marshes and most probably won't meet a soul. I shall go on about a hundred paces ahead, so as to be able to run back and give warning of any danger. Each of my friends can carry ten pigeons. I'll take the little capsules and the paper with me."

I should here explain that the messages, written on the finest and thinnest paper, were enclosed in a tiny aluminium capsule which was then attached to one of the pigeon's legs. This, however, was not all. First, the spies had to hand over the pigeons to the despatching agent during the night so as

not to excite suspicion. Next, the agent had to keep the birds well hidden, for every possessor of pigeons was naturally suspect, on the German side no less than on the Russian.

And even then the matter was not ended. A pigeon rising into the air was always an object of suspicion. As they always rose in narrow spirals on leaving the ground it was not difficult to determine the point of their departure. In fact, an expert could name the starting point with absolute precision. Consequently, the despatching agent " over there " had to go about his work with the utmost skill and circumspection. Only the remotest farm premises were used, where one was not likely to be disturbed by inquisitive neighbours.

A carrier pigeon flying over the front always drew attention by reason of its arrow-straight course. Needless to say, they invariably aroused suspicion and were fired at by both sides. At a careful estimate 30 per cent. of these pigeons were shot down. I had therefore given orders that every message must be sent in duplicate by two separate birds. If one were brought down there was always the possibility that the other would get through.

" But," the layman may reasonably ask, " was it worth while to convey these pigeons across the front when the undertaking was fraught with such peril, besides exposing the agent on the other side to so much danger ? After all, the messages could have been conveyed by human carriers without much risk."

That is true up to a point, and we should not have used carrier piegons at all if it had been possible to substitue human messengers in every case.

In order to keep in touch with developments in the enemy hinterland we had to maintain there permanently a considerable number of agents, each of whom was responsible for a specified sector. But the supply of agents was not unlimited. Intelligent and absolutely trustworthy men were scarce, quite apart from the fact that the carrier pigeon was from ten to twenty times faster than the human messenger. A few agents equipped with pigeons, distributed at wide intervals, were of more use than ten times the number working without pigeons.

As already stated, by my instructions each message was despatched twice by separate birds. In practice this turned out to be very important. In six cases out of ten only one pigeon got through safely ; the others must have been shot down over the front either by our own people or the Russians.

I will here cite one case in which neither agent nor wireless intercept could replace the gallant pigeon. By order of

Russian G.H.Q. the 19th Army Corps—a particularly good unit—then in reserve at a place east of Ossowiecz, was to be entrained at once, and thirty-six hours later was to break through our thinly-held front at Mitau. The wireless station of the 19th Army Corps was moved accordingly, without the fact being announced as it usually was. It would have taken an agent at least twenty hours to bring us the news, and we should, therefore, not have had time to reinforce the threatened sector.

Moreover, the Russians had taken special measures to keep these troop movements secret, and the front in the neighbourhood of Ossowiecz was so strongly patrolled that it would have been impossible for the time being for an agent to get through. So all our measures seemed fruitless.

In this emergency the carrier pigeon agent in the zone concerned proved himself to be particularly smart and cautious. He despatched three pigeons with the same message, because they had to fly over the fortress of Ossowiecz. The result vindicated his lavish use of the pigeons. Two were shot down over Ossowiecz, so that had no more been sent we should never have received this vital report.

One got home. On a minute scrap of paper which I took out of the aluminium cylinder stood these words : " Transfer of 19th Army Corps began early to-day. Army Corps will attack both sides of the Riga-Mitau road, and immediately after arrival."

I at once had the wires cleared for an important General Staff conference, and called up the Intelligence Officer of the army concerned. The result was that our reinforcements arrived in the nick of time : in other words, a single carrier pigeon had saved the situation. When the Russians attacked they suffered heavy losses and were compelled to retire.

That, of course, is only one example out of many. The industrious carrier pigeon was in many cases simply indispensable, and it will be just the same in future wars.

VI

It was some three weeks after Genia's return from Odessa that she and Felix and myself held a new conference. I had two important tasks which had to be performed without delay, and as Felix and Genia were my boldest and most trustworthy assistants I naturally turned to them first. One of my tasks was to convey a large number of carrier pigeons to my agents behind the Russian front.

There were abundant signs that the Russians were preparing to take the offensive at certain parts of the front, chiefly in the south against the Austrians. Several of their wireless stations had suspended their daily activities, which indicated that they had been dismantled for removal. For this reason the carrier pigeon had again become our principal aid, and the supply of these birds behind the enemy front had therefore to be increased as far as possible, before it was too late. Consequently, we decided that Felix, accompanied by four reliable men, should go with the pigeons on the very next evening. And, further, that on the next day but one Genia should travel to Mogileff, there to mix with the Russian officers and learn what she could of the impending offensive. The next evening, therefore, I escorted Felix, his friends, and the pigeons to the front, and on the following day I also saw Genia off on her mission.

I was surprised to notice that Genia, contrary to her usual demeanour, was this time depressed and timorous. "What's the matter, Genia Josifovna?" I asked her. "Why are you so sad?"

"Oh, I expect it's all nonsense," she replied, "and one mustn't be superstitious."

"But do tell me. It will relieve your mind."

"It's just silliness. Only a dream, that's all. My mother dreamed last night that she saw me in a long white garment with white roses in my hair, and when we were having tea together this morning she said: "Do you know what that means? A white garment and white flowers mean death. Genia, dear, don't go this time. Stay at home just this once!' 'But, darling Mother,' I answered, 'first of all, dreams are nonsense; and, secondly, I have absolutely promised the Lieutenant to carry out his important mission to-night. A promise is a promise. I shall be back in ten days, and then you'll be the first to laugh at your dream.'

"But in spite of this my Mother cried bitterly when I left. Now you'll understand why I'm sad," she added, with a brave smile.

"Now, Genia, if you are frightened or uneasy in any way, I'll send Petrovski instead, though of course he won't do it half as well as you."

"No, no!" she cried, "not in any circumstances. I only told you the story because you asked why I was so silent. Let us go quickly to the Colonel in his dug-out and drink some wine, so that we may be jolly once more. Or have you some wine here?"

"I might have been a thought-reader, for, as it happens,

I have brought wine with me, and also some chocolate to keep you from being hungry till to-morrow morning. Unfortunately, I forgot to bring a glass, so we'll have to drink out of the bottle."

"But, of course," she cried, with beaming face.

It was a glorious summer night, and the entire front was as peaceful as on the last occasion. Birds twittered in the trees. A light mist was rising from the earth. We stepped aside a little. Genia hung on my arm and let herself be led like a small child. We sat down on the edge of a dried-up trench and Genia gazed dreamily into space.

"Until now we have only talked business," she began, after a long pause; "and you hardly know who I am. Shall I tell you, or will it bore you? It will be dark for a long time yet, and we have hours to spare."

"Of course, Genia. You ought to know that I am deeply interested in all that concerns you. But first of all you must have another good drink, because I brought the wine specially for you. I don't care much for it; port is too sweet for my taste."

Genia then told me about her life, and suddenly, when she had finished, she began to weep.

"What is it, then, Genia?" I asked her fearfully. "Why are you crying?" She laid her head on my shoulder and sobbed quietly.

"Will you be cross with me if I *tell* you a tremendous secret?" she whispered; "a secret I have never told anybody, not even my mother."

"Tell me, Genia."

"You won't despise me or think me a bad woman?"

"No, no, Genia. I promise you that," I reassured her.

Then she put her arms round me and laid her pretty head on my breast.

"It's the first time in my life that I, whom you always call 'the proud Genia,' have wept about a man and felt humiliated. And it's such a hopeless love. . . . Has it never occurred to you that you are something more to me than my chief? That I would go through fire for you, Sascha,* because I love you more than anything in all the world? Oh! you will despise me because I am already engaged to Felix! But I can't help it that I love you. I have often wanted to tell you, especially the last time you brought me through the trenches. Tell me now, do you despise me?"

"Silly little Genia, how can you imagine such nonsense?

* Diminative of Alexander.

I did have an idea of it, but I wouldn't take any notice because of your engagement to Felix."

Perhaps in my confused state I chose the wrong words. On the other hand, sitting at my side was a lovable woman who in a few hours would be running a very grave risk of her life just to fulfil a promise to me. How, then, could I be hard or shatter all Genia's hopes?

"Leave that to me," she said. "If I tell Felix that I love you he will set me free. He's an honourable man and no one knows him as well as I. Let me go on my way happily, and promise me that on my return I may speak to Felix about it. Will you promise me that?"

"I promise, my little Genia."

Then her silvery laugh rang out again as of old.

"Well, now, everything that has been worrying me these last few weeks is over and done with, and I'm merry once more. Press my hand before I leave you."

I gripped her soft little hand, which trembled as it lay in mine.

"Never have I gone 'over there' so willingly as I do now, Sascha, and this time you shall have the best report I have ever brought back. I'll work for you and do everything you wish until the war is over. . . ."

And again she rested her head on my shoulder. But she was weeping again. The moon broke through the clouds and its beams played in the tree tops. Round about us a thick mist mantled the earth.

"What time is it, Sascha?" she inquired.

"Half-past three."

"Oh! then, I must go quickly or it will be too light. How the time has flown! Well, in ten days I'll be back at the same place. Will you be waiting for me? Promise!"

"Of course I'll be waiting, my little Genia. And may the best, the very best of luck go with you!"

"And may I speak to Felix on my return?"

"Certainly, I've promised you that."

"God bless you, Sascha!" she cried.

Then the mist closed about her.

"God bless *you*, Genia," I called after her. Then she vanished into the darkness.

Night after night I waited for her. Genia never came back. . . .

VII

Felix duly returned from his carrier pigeon expedition, having faithfully delivered the birds to my agents on the other side.

"This time it wasn't so easy," he told me. "We ran into a Russian patrol and had to hide the pigeon baskets in a spinney. On their way back the patrol passed right by the place. What a fright I had! But luckily the pigeons didn't make a sound, and the soldiers went on unsuspecting."

While the gallant Felix was telling me all this I felt truly sorry for him, and I made up my mind that when Genia got back I would plead with her not to break with him.

On the tenth day, as we had agreed, I waited for Genia at the place whence she had vanished that foggy night. Hour after hour went by, but Genia did not come. At daybreak I returned to Staff headquarters. For five days on end I waited in this way. On the sixth day I spoke to Felix.

"I'm pretty certain now that something has happened to Genia," he said, in deep dejection. "I fear the worst, Lieutenant. Without a doubt she's dead. Otherwise she would be here."

I tried to contradict this, but he did not hear me.

"I have worked for you faithfully," he went on, "and, I believe, with success. Just now things are quiet at the front and you can spare me for a fortnight. So please give me two weeks' leave, so that I may find out what has happened to Genia."

"Of course, Felix," I cried. "We must hope for the best. It may be that Genia is only held up somewhere."

But Felix shook his head.

"Do you know what I feel? Genia is long since dead!"

Felix returned after three weeks. His hair hung unkempt on his forehead, his hands shook.

"They have hanged Genia," he murmured hoarsely.

I sprang to my feet. "Hanged?" I exclaimed in horror, breaking into a cold sweat. He could hardly speak; he only nodded in assent. "Dreadful!" I muttered. "Our little Genia. Tell me, Felix."

With his head in his hands Felix sobbed like a child.

"Of course," he began heavily; "you know there was a man who wanted Genia and was repulsed by her, and that this fellow swore to have his revenge. . . . I went to Mogileff and there I heard from a Jew who keeps a café that a very

pretty German spy had been hanged about two weeks before. When I pressed a hundred roubles into his palm he promised to introduce me next day in his café to a man who knew all about the affair.

"This man was an elderly person who acted as clerk to the local court martial. After his detailed description it was quite certain that the woman was Genia. This is what he told me :

"'The proceedings at the court martial had lasted several hours. At first it was thought that she would not be condemned to death. Her youth and beauty did not fail to make an impression. Only when the prosecutor described her as one of the most dangerous of all German spies did the sentiment of the court gradually change. I was present at the trial as senior clerk and was amazed at the admirable coolness with which Genia Josifovna sat on the prisoner's bench. She gave no sign of emotion. It seemed to me almost as if she were courting death. Certainly, at the moment when the president pronounced sentence of death by the rope I was more upset than the girl was.

"'Do you wish to appeal for mercy to the higher command?" asked the president. "The death sentence may possibly be changed to one of life-long exile to Siberia? To Siberia for life?" cried the prisoner. "No, I do not want such mercy!"

"'Next morning, almost before it had dawned, she was hanged. I felt it so badly that I reported myself sick, for otherwise it would have been my duty to attend the execution. My colleague told me afterwards that even the not very sensitive hangman was touched when he saw the young and fair victim. He was merciful in that, as he was adjusting the noose, he broke her neck by a sudden pressure of his knuckles and thus saved her from the slow agony of death by strangulation. He told this later to an officer of gendarmes, who passed it on to me!'

"Well," sobbed Felix, "now you know how it was, Lieutenant. So died our little Genia!"

"So died our little Genia," I repeated; for I could not conceive of that dear, sweet and merry girl lying somewhere at this very moment in a nameless grave like a common criminal. I gazed at Felix's pale face, in which sparkled two feverish eyes. "But you haven't told me everything, Felix!"

"No, Lieutenant, I have not told you all. There is a second part to my report: how I discovered the traitor and what vengeance I took upon him. Would a murder committed behind the Russian front, the victim being the betrayer of a German woman agent, be punishable here, Lieutenant?"

"No. Definitely not. If you have dealt with this traitor he fully deserved his fate."

Felix wiped the tears from his eyes.

"I wish he had had a thousand lives—I would have taken them all! . . . One day after the court martial official had told me his story I spoke privately with the old Jew and opened my heart to him. I told him that Genia was my fiancée and why the fellow had denounced her. Knowing the Jew to be a fanatical hater of the Russians, I could safely be frank with him.

"'God of the just!' he said. 'May both my eyes become blind and leprosy consume me if I betray you to these Russian dogs!'

"'Will you, then, do me a great favour?'

"'I'll do anything for you, gentleman.'

"'Then help me to find this scoundrel. It won't bring any harm to you?'

"'That may not be so difficult,' answered the Jew; 'for the old official you spoke to yesterday is clerk to the court martial and will know the name of the traitor. If I'm not mistaken, he's even told me that the man is a Russian secret agent. The old official is Polish, and hates the Russians as I do. I can tell him the plain truth, and when he hears that you were the fiancé of the poor little girl for whom he grieved he will certainly help you.'

"The old Jew had not promised too much. When I returned to him on the following evening he whispered in my ear a name. 'He's called Budsinski, is it not so?' Eugeni Budsinski! I started, for this was the very man whose advances Genia had repelled. . . .

"'He's here in Mogileff now,' said the old Jew, 'and he lives at a low pot-house on the other bank of the Dnieper. For betraying the girl he received a special reward of 200 roubles, and at present he spends most of the day in the tavern, drunk all the time. In the back room, of course, since alcohol is strictly forbidden.'

"Now came the most difficult and dangerous part of my plan. To shoot the scoundrel from behind would have been easy enough. But that was far too speedy and pleasant a death. I went, therefore, to Lida, where I have two friends who were at school with me. When I told them about the dreadful fate of my little Genia they were both ready to help me. So we all three returned to Mogileff the same day.

"I dared not visit the tavern myself, for if the fellow recognised me he would, of course, at once deliver me up to the gallows. Lest he should recognise me in the street I got a

friend of the old Jew's, a former theatrical hairdresser, to fit me up with such a convincing moustache and beard that even a sharp detective would not have known me by daylight.

"We made our final preparations. It was a dark, rainy night, and very few people were abroad in the streets. We crossed the bridge to the farther bank of the Dnieper. Two sentries stood on the bridge, but they let us pass unchallenged. It proved to be a long way to the tavern, which was one of the last houses of the town. Actually it lay beyond the town and adjoined a large field which led to a wood.

"To one of my companions I gave the little secret pass which we took from that villain in the brown cloak and which you handed over to me in case I was ever held up by a Russian sentry. It was with this pass that my friend was to lure Budsinski into the trap.

"And the plan worked. With a hand-cart and a coil of rope I waited behind a bush in the field, while my friends entered the tavern. Budsinski was, as usual, already pretty far gone in liquor. When I think of it now, it was a devilishly risky business. If the scoundrel had felt the slightest suspicion my two friends would have been lost men. In the fullest sense of the phrase they staked their lives on a card. But all went well. After they had drunk a few cups of coffee in the front room and eaten a snack, one of them showed the landlord the little pass and asked for Budsinski. With uncertain steps and breathing a cloud of alcohol as he came, Budsinski emerged from the back room, from which women's voices could be heard.

"My friend stepped up to Budsinski and showed him the pass. 'All right, all right, I see. What is it?' 'I've just come from the Staff, from Colonel Efimov,' said my friend. 'Both of us have to leave to-morrow, and I am to tell you what it's about. I won't say anything more here. I hear women's voices yonder and there are people sitting in this room. Come out into the road. I won't detain you more than five minutes at most. And here is a colleague of ours,' he added, introducing his companion.

"'Oh! well, then I'd better step outside,' grumbled Budsinski, and unsuspectingly followed my two friends.

"Far and wide not a soul was in sight. Before the villain could utter a cry one of my friends thrust a gag in his mouth while the other bound his hands behind his back. Then we wound him about with rope from head to foot and laid him in the hand-cart. Silently we pushed the cart across the field to the fringe of the wood. There we stopped and set the fettered scoundrel upon his feet.

" 'I am Felix Wolski, the fiancé of Genia, whom you sent to the gallows.' As I spoke I flashed my torch in his face; it was distorted with fear and ghastly pale.

" 'You walked into the trap and are now in my power, Eugeni Budsinski. You once threatened Genia and said, " an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," and now you have carried out your threat. But this is the hour of *my* vengeance. I cannot bring Genia Josifovna back to life, but you shall die a still more awful death!'

" I am not a hard-hearted man, Lieutenant, but I must confess that I gloated over the absolute terror which was stamped on my rival's features. 'I know of no torture too horrible for this beast in human form,' I said to my friends in a loud and clear voice. 'Bullet and rope are much too merciful—we'll bury the dog alive!' At these words the villain fell on his knees and whimpered, so far as the gag in his mouth would permit. We left him on his knees, took spades from the cart, and began to dig before his very eyes. It took us about half an hour to excavate the grave, and in that half-hour I enjoyed the full savour of my revenge. The villain's whining was balm to my wounded soul. Our little Genia will be pleased with me!

" The half-hour was now up. We seized Budsinski and hurled him into the grave. He rolled from side to side, moaning continually.

" Very slowly, spadeful by spadeful, we threw the damp soil into the grave. He tried to raise himself to his knees, but always we thrust him back with our spades. Then it was finished. We tramped the grave down and covered it over with turf. I lighted up the place with my torch; nothing was to be seen except a small, low mound which looked quite natural. That is how I avenged Genia Josifovna, Lieutenant."

Never after that did I see Felix laugh. . . .

THE AMERICAN SECRET SERVICE AND THE CAPTURE OF THE KAISER'S FAVOURITE SON

By
EDWIN T. WOODHALL

According to the account of Major C. E. Russell, late Chief of the Criminal Intelligence Service for the American Expeditionary Force, there is a remarkable episode of espionage that places their Intelligence system high in the ranks of Allied Secret Service.

Marshal Foch, Sir Douglas Haig, General Pershing, and many other Allied officers of high rank had met in a château in Northern France to discuss the critical problems of Ludendorf's terrific effort to crush the Allied Forces. The blow had been struck and the English 5th Army was reeling.

More information was essential. Foch and Haig knew that this first blow was but a prelude to what was to follow. The German plans must be known at all costs.

The Americans rose splendidly to the occasion.

According to Major Russell, attending this conference was Colonel R——, the officer in charge of the Intelligence work of General Pershing's staff. He said in reply to a question of Marshal Foch, "While I do not desire to discredit any one, I am convinced that I have the very men in my service who can penetrate the German lines and secure the desired information. One of these men has been most successful in this type of work and was in Spain for us during the entire Spanish-American War. I am confident that we can get the data if we are granted permission to try."

Four members of the American Secret Service were specially selected, and a conference was held with other members of the Allied Intelligence to discuss all the necessary plans and schemes for this daring feat.

Spain was decided upon as a starting-off point for the mission. Apart from the British and French counter-espionage system in practice all over Spain, the American Intelligence claimed to have special ramifications of their own.

From now on I shall refer to these clever and intrepid American spies as "Chief," "Colonel," "Major," and the "Engineer."

The "Colonel" was selected first—he spoke fluent Spanish, and had a thorough knowledge of Spain and its customs. He was to cross the frontier and pretend that he was a fugitive, wrongly accused of forgery, and bitter against the Allies—the American Army in particular. He was sympathetic to the German nation, and what was more, he had valuable information about the American Army, as to strength, munition disposition and plans.

The "Chief" and the "Major" were to cross over into Spain via Hendaye so as to help the "Colonel" in his plan.

With no papers upon him the "Colonel" started off upon his fateful journey. For good or ill the first move had been made. Upon his arrival at the Franco-Spanish frontier town of Hendaye, he secured quarters for the night at a third-rate hotel.

The next morning, according to plan, he was arrested before many onlookers, by the "Chief" and "Major" as a dangerous crook, and taken to the American quarters.

It was given out that the American police had arrested a dangerous criminal of their own country. The news spread all over the town. Just what was desired. The Spanish gendarmes and the guard upon duty at the International Bridge were requested to see him for the purposes of identification.

In order to see if the scheme had worked satisfactorily and that gossip about the dangerous American criminal had travelled ahead, the "Major" journeyed into the interior to make discreet inquiries. He returned in the evening to report that the little bit of propaganda had worked out beyond their wildest dreams. The arrest was known in San Sebastian. In this town was the seat of German Secret Service. It was here that the famous group of five ruled the espionage interests of Germany.

Now was the time to act. The "Colonel" had to escape. He might be shot in the attempt. The risk had to be taken.

At the change of guard that night the "Colonel" made his dash for liberty.

Shots were fired in all directions! Police and Spanish soldiery rushed about and blazed into the shadows of the night.

All that night, and for several days the "Chief" and "Major" organised search-parties. The plan was working to precision.

Soon the news got through that the "Colonel" was in San Sebastian; so the "Chief" and "Major" were sent there to shadow him. He was to be harried as much as possible. This to convince the German Secret Service agents,

who were watching every move, that the man was what he represented to be, a crook, whom the clumsy American Police intended to run down and arrest.

During his deliberate absence, the "Chief" and the "Major" broke into the room of his hotel and searched it, making much fuss and disorder in the process, to arouse more than ordinary attention.

When the "Colonel" returned, after his friends' departure, he made indignant protests to the hotel management. While he was doing so a man sidled up to him, and, in a significantly quiet tone of voice, said that if the "Colonel" would accompany him to his room he would give him some information regarding the people who had ransacked his apartment.

For reply, the "Colonel" acted up to his part. "Oh, you know who they are? You know all about *me*, I suppose? But I don't know who you are. Get me up to your room, and then who knows? I might vanish! What do you take me for? We're living in funny times these days. However, what's the number of your room—in case I change my mind and decide to trust you?" The "Colonel" then walked away. But the man had given him the number of his room.

Intuitively the "Colonel" knew that this man was a member of the German Secret Service. In the afternoon he decided to take the step. He knew he was being watched upon all sides. Going up to the first floor of the hotel, he knocked at a door. It was at once opened by his friend of the morning.

Entering the stranger's room he saw four men seated at a table, and the "Colonel" guessed that he was in the presence of the German Secret Service espionage department—at last. He was courteously introduced to them all. "We know your case," said one. "Perhaps if you help us, we can help you. Do you speak German?"

"No," said the "Colonel," "only Spanish and French." (He spoke German fluently.)

Ignoring the "Colonel" for the moment, they held a hurried council, speaking in German, every word of which their visitor understood. But he stood before them aimlessly, pretending not to understand.

The spokesman of the party then addressed him in Spanish. "We are members of the German Counter-Espionage in Spain. We need reliable agents. If you work for us, we will pay you well. Information is what we want. You can get it. If you serve us well—good! If you play us false, no matter where you hide, you will be found—and killed. Those are the conditions. If the proposition seems to you unpleasing,

or you are afraid, say so now. Otherwise, come in with us and serve faithfully."

The "Colonel" said he would like time to think it over.

"Very well, we shall be waiting for you at 3.30 p.m. Until then, good luck, and I hope—not good-bye."

At the time appointed he returned.

"I accept your offer. The Americans have put a price upon my capture. I am an innocent man. All I now work for is—revenge."

The Germans were sympathetic: they told him the protection of the mighty German Empire was his. It had a long arm, and a fist that was always ready to strike the enemies of its faithful servants.

After a few more preliminaries the leader outlined the nature of the first mission.

"The Americans recently captured one of our men at their base ports. He is about to be tried as a spy. This man, who is known to them merely as 'Muller,' is, in fact, a member of the German nobility.

"The Kaiser is anxious that this man should escape. You are to return to France with this object in view. We will render you, naturally, every assistance possible from this end. If you cannot procure his escape by other means, try bribing his guards—money is no object. You can have as much as you require for this purpose."

After telling the "Colonel" where the German nobleman was incarcerated, the leader went on to ask about the plans of a certain motor lorry and gun with which the American Army were being supplied.

"While upon this mission, you can also concentrate upon securing the blue-prints of this invention—it is badly wanted by our General Staff in France."

The "Colonel" was then given a large sum of money for his preliminary expenses.

He was to represent himself as a Spaniard, and he would travel on a passport that allowed him to pass absolutely unquestioned and unhindered anywhere in France.

The next morning the "Colonel" left the hotel, making sure all the time that he was not being shadowed. Upon this score he soon made his mind at rest.

Arriving at the Spanish frontier, disguised, affluent and with a Spanish visa on his passport, he was immediately allowed to pass. Was he not an important official entering France upon urgent matters concerning the Spanish Government?

Once on the train the "Spaniard" was shadowed to his compartment by the "Major." Both hoped for privacy, but

in this they were disappointed. Two people entered the same compartment.

The "Colonel" however managed to pass a note to the "Major." It read, "Get off at the station where you see me alight." Which the "Major" did.

Shaking hands in the shelter of a small waiting-room, after the train had gone, the "Colonel" told the "Major" the whole story and arranged for a meeting in Paris. When the next train came in, both agents parted and travelled as strangers in separate compartments. Soon the "Spaniard" at his quiet hotel was visited by the "Chief," the "Major," and the "Engineer."

The important business of freeing the German nobleman was anxiously discussed.

All felt that if this highly-born prisoner were rescued there was no telling what could not be done with the German Secret Service! It was a trump card.

The "Chief" went to headquarters to find out the status of this all-important prisoner. He was under sentence of death. And it was determined that the sentence should be carried out.

The American argued passionately with the Staff Officer in charge of the affair that this particular man was important to the Allied Intelligence—he was wanted as an agent for a particular mission.

The Staff Officer said, "Apparently the importance of the prisoner's identity is not known to you?"

"No, it is not," replied the "Chief."

"*Well, he is Prince Joachim, the Kaiser's favourite son!*"

Soon the "Chief" learned the history of the case. A young man had been discovered in the docks of La Rochelle—trying to set fire to a shed containing important aviation material. His refusal to discuss any point of German information had marked him, in the eyes of the Americans, as a brave man.

Even up to the time of his approaching execution he had not disclosed his identity. But, as will be seen from above, this was known. Meanwhile, the Germans, through various channels, diplomatic and otherwise, had been making frantic appeals to obtain the release of the prisoner "Muller."

At all costs, to serve the ends of the Allies, this man must be released. So the Staff officer was taken into their confidence.

It was then decided that the American group of Intelligence men should move to the immediate scene of the prison where "Muller" was confined.

The "Colonel," still disguised as a Spaniard, was "arrested" by his colleagues upon suspicion, and lodged in the prison where he soon got into touch with "Muller." A plot was arranged.

"I am here by the order of the German Secret Service. I am to help you escape. When you are out on your evening exercise, and you see another man beckon to you—a visitor—run for it. I shall be outside the gate with a car." This was his plan.

"Muller" was delighted. He promised to obey.

The next morning the Chief of the American Intelligence called upon the acting French Intelligence Officer, and told him to release the "Spaniard" as everything was now in perfect order.

Accordingly the Prison Governor was seen and the "Spaniard" released the same morning.

He managed to get a final warning to the prisoner before he left. "This evening!"

Exactly at the moment when the prisoner in the evening went out to exercise, the "Major" presented himself at the prison gate, dressed as an officer in the uniform of the American Army. He was treated with deference by the guard.

The "Major's" car was outside, large, powerful, with big engines built for acceleration into top speed in about ten seconds. The engine was running.

As the "Major" stepped into the prison through the wicket gate, the "Colonel" got into the driver's seat outside.

The "Major" inside directed the sentry's attention elsewhere, and at that moment the prisoner passed the gate. One signal was enough. He raced for the car! The guard rushed after him, followed by the "Major," who skidded with a clever fall upon his back, and brought the sentry down with him.

Up in a second, the "Major" rushed to the wicket gate and fired his automatic at the retreating car. By the time the sentry reached the gate, the car had disappeared. The chase was taken up but the fugitives escaped.

The "Colonel" and "Muller" reached Spain safely, crossing the frontier by some route well known and already mapped out by the Intelligence group.

Upon arrival the Prince was joyously acclaimed by the "Colonel's" German Intelligence employers.

The "Colonel" had won the Royal adventurer's admiration—and above all, the complete confidence of the German Intelligence Bureau.

His fidelity to the German cause had been established.

Some time afterwards the Colonel started off once again for France; this time to procure for Germany the plans of the latest deadly American invention.

"I know the very man in Paris," the "Colonel" told the German chief, "who for a large sum will put you in full possession of the knowledge required."

The Prince did not wish the "Colonel" to return to France. "He is too brave a man. He is going to certain death. Besides I owe him a debt which nothing can repay. He saved my life," he said.

After a long discussion the "Colonel" had his way. But this time his entry into France was by another route, and under entirely different circumstances.

A picked Spanish guide who knew every foot of the mountains was to pilot him into France.

In a raging storm and pitch darkness they set out at midnight to attempt the crossing. The mountain trail was a terrible passage at the best of times, known only to smugglers.

Up the trail they climbed, sometimes the path being so narrow that scarcely a few inches separated them from the precipitous edge—and a plunge of thousands of feet to death.

Water poured off them; slipping, sliding, sometimes crawling on all fours, they began the descent.

Dawn broke, and French soil was in sight.

Making sure that no sentry was about, they sneaked down into a little village—and struck a main mountain road. Here the "Colonel" said good-bye to his smuggler friend.

Hiding by night and travelling by day, the "Colonel" avoided all towns like the plague. He had no papers.

Luck, however, was to stand him in good stead. An American motor lorry picked him up, his explanation being that he was on his way to Paris to join the American Expeditionary Force.

Arriving at his hotel in Paris, he was soon joined by the "Chief" and his other comrades. They were all delighted at his return, having passed an anxious time since his escape, with no news obtainable.

The account of the "Colonel's" adventures now enters into an entirely different phase. He had been deputed to get the secret plans of America's latest tank.

The "Chief," with the "Major," then held a conference as to the ways and means of getting the Germans these plans.

The "Engineer" was called into action. He was told the perilous nature of the job, the only reward, in all probability, being dawn, a brick wall and a firing squad. But the

"Engineer" was brave. "I am willing to take the risk," he replied, "willing to help—and willing to die for the Allies."

He set to, procuring blue-prints, also plans of some motor and mechanical parts that would fool the Germans.

He was to return with the "Colonel," and was to talk so technically that the German Intelligence Chiefs in San Sebastian would be unable to understand him.

On the plea that they were hunting American deserters they worked their way between Pau and the Spanish border, then very quietly slipped up into the mountains and gradually worked down into Spain finally reaching the Five Group at San Sebastian.

The "Engineer" tried to explain to the German Five Group the technical workings of the blue-print, but as intended, the details were too complicated for their comprehension. The "Engineer" had purposely confused them.

Then they decided that the only way out was to send the "Engineer" into Germany.

But when the "Colonel" proposed this plan to the "Engineer," he refused to go unless the "Colonel" went with him.

At this point Prince Joachim intervened in the negotiations. He was intensely interested in the "Colonel's" plans and settled a vital point by stating that both men would go to Germany with him.

"But how?" inquired the "Colonel." "France is impossible! So are all the neutral countries. Why! the whole Intelligence Police of the Allies have my description. I should be arrested at the first control barrier."

"Don't be alarmed," replied the Prince. "We have a regular service running from Spain to the Kiel Canal. Our submarines have been running for over three years. So far —with the exception of two—no harm has come to this secret route. But you must be prepared to take this risk. I am accompanying you, and will answer for your safety to our General Staff."

And so it was arranged.

The submarine that was expected arrived two days late. The "Colonel" heard the captain tell the Five Group that while in the English Channel a couple of destroyers had chased him for hours.

He had only averted mishap by submerging and swimming to the bottom, where he lay with a tremendous water depth above him. He had to stay at the bottom for nearly six hours.

"These English are making it hell for us submarine commanders," he said significantly.

The various members of the German Five Group looked at each other. They knew this particular submarine commander. An experienced, hard, and resolute man. When he spoke, he meant what he said.

Upon being told he had three passengers to take back with him, he refused to take them. But Prince Joachim insisted, and had his way.

At nightfall, the little party was rowed out to the submarine. They climbed aboard and went below. The two spies were shown to a small compartment, and warned by the captain that it was to be their quarters until the end of the journey.

"Do not wander from this cabin. My men do not like English or Americans. You might get hit on the head. They do not understand the methods of Secret Service people."

In this manner they spent the remainder of the trip. Once the Prince came to see them, and courteously inquired as to their welfare. But beyond this incident, and the daily entrance with food by a German petty officer, nothing occurred to break their cramped, monotonous journey.

The voyage at last ended and they rose to the surface in German territorial waters outside the fortified entrance to Kiel harbour.

Upon arrival on shore, the Prince conducted them through the great submarine harbour to the nearby barracks, bidding them wait while he went to see the General commanding the naval base forces.

As they stood there waiting, they were the object of much attention from several officers. One officer who had just come from the inside stopped in front of them and spoke in English.

He asked several questions as to their nationality, then inquired if they spoke German. Upon being told no, he turned to the group of onlookers, and said in German, "Two Americans, both traitors, selling their country already."

The Prince then came to the door and beckoned them to follow him. They were shown into the presence of the General. He spoke in fluent English.

"I am given to understand that you have saved the life of his Royal Highness. Germany is for ever indebted to you. While here, under my protection, you can be assured of every attention to your personal comforts and protection." All smiled and bowed, the Prince saying good-bye, and leaving them.

That was the last they ever saw of him.

The General then turned to them and said, " I have told off an officer for your personal requirements who will also act as interpreter. I will send for him." He pressed a button on his desk.

Presently there was a knock at the door, and an officer entered. " Meet Captain Schmidt," he said. The " Colonel " and the " Engineer " stared.

Captain Schmidt was the same officer who had spoken insultingly of them outside the door. Their eyes gleamed as they followed him.

The " Colonel " and the " Engineer," by aiding Prince Joachim to escape, had won the confidence of the German Secret Service, and had reached Kiel with bogus plans of the American tank they had been sent to obtain.

They remained in the barracks for about two days, and on the evening of the second day Captain Schmidt told them to get ready to start off on the following morning for a journey to Grand General Headquarters.

At last they were to see the mighty controlling machine of the Imperial German Army !

All next day they travelled in an enclosed first-class compartment, arriving at Coblenz in the evening.

They were conducted to a small hotel and told by Captain Schmidt to make themselves comfortable. They would be allowed out from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., but they must pose as Spaniards, two false identity papers being handed to them for that purpose, in case of being challenged whilst out by the German Intelligence.

The next day they went into a small but select café. While seated there they discussed the general position in Spanish, in undertones that could not be overheard by any suspicious eavesdropper.

After being seated for about half an hour, the " Colonel " noticed that a very pretty girl, stylishly dressed, was constantly looking towards him.

He pretended not to be conscious of this—but every time his eyes wandered in her direction, they met the intent gaze of this woman.

As they were looking round for the waiter, prior to settling their account and departing, the woman came over to their table, and addressed them in Spanish.

" You will excuse me, but I think you are foreigners. Am I right in presuming you are Spanish. The waiter told me that was the case."

" Yes," said the " Colonel," " I see you speak our

language. Will you not sit down and take a drink with us. It is good to hear one's mother language spoken by such a charming woman of this country."

The woman sat down, and for over an hour the three conversed together, finally parting with the arrangement that they would meet again at the same place next day.

Once in their room the "Colonel" addressed himself to the "Engineer." "She's a spy! She's sent to watch us. Possibly to make love to one of us, with the object of seeing if anything can be found out. I think it's me she has set her mind on, so I will play her game."

From that time onwards she met them each day.

The following week, Schmidt came to tell them that the "Engineer" was required to go each day to the Aviation and Mechanical Branch to discuss the intricacies of the blue-prints with the German experts. So far, G.H.Q. were not ready to see the "Colonel," so he must make the time pass the best way he could.

Both men felt that the German Secret Service was playing with them. Playing for time.

Everything pointed that way. "If they want to send you away, don't let them," said the "Colonel." "It's death for you certain. Once in possession of the information, our end is short. I can divine their intentions only too well. It looks as though they have beaten us. If so, our mission and all the sacrifices we have made will have been in vain. In any case, if we have to die—let's die together."

The two men shook hands.

Then something unforeseen happened which entirely changed the situation.

Greta, the German woman spy, had fallen in love with the "Colonel." One afternoon she told him all.

"I was sent to make you fall in love with me. Instead I have fallen a victim to my own emotions, I, Greta—the woman who thought that she was impervious to such things." She was deeply moved. "Meet me in the park to-morrow instead of here; there is much I want to tell you."

That same night the two Americans discussed the situation from all angles. Both intuitively felt they were discovered. It was only a question of time. The "Engineer" was certain that the German experts were acting. Their interest was only on the surface. As soon as they knew all there was to learn about the invention—*he was to be sent into the interior to help in the construction.* Both men looked at each other. They knew what this meant. By dawn that morning they had decided to make a bolt for it at the first opportunity.

Early that morning Schmidt knocked at the door. "You," he said to the "Colonel," "will accompany me at ten o'clock to the Grand General Headquarters, your interview is now arranged."

At 10 a.m. Schmidt conducted him across the city, bringing him at last to a large hotel where he was taken up in a lift to the second floor and shown into a large room, with many large maps hung on the walls. Standing by the desk was Field-Marshal von Hindenburg.

"I am sorry you have been kept waiting so long to see me—but I am not often here. I know all about you, and expressed a wish to see you myself. My time is precious. Big things are on the eve of happening. Tell me as briefly as possible all you know about the American Forces in France."

For an hour the "Colonel" sat on and told him. *He told the truth.* "We have two million Americans sailing to France. There are three-quarters of a million in the field now. There are 5,000 aeroplanes, 2,000 guns and thousands of men to follow. Millions of tons of munitions and supplies——" and so the report went on.

The face of the Marshal had altered. He was visibly agitated. To him it was the writing on the wall.

For some time he paced the room, not speaking a word. Then walking to his desk he pressed a button.

"Enough! I will send for you again." Captain Schmidt then opened the door and the interview was at an end. Outside the hotel the Captain left him. "You know where to go, and what to do. I will come for you again as soon as your presence is required."

That same afternoon the "Colonel," who by now had come to care for the German girl in the enemy Secret Service, kept his appointment in the park as arranged.

Greta was waiting for him.

"Listen intently. Listen, my dear, as you have never listened before in your life. Both of you are to die! I know who you are, our Secret Service has your history. You are both American officers. I do not care if you are genuine or not. I do not care if you are an American criminal. Our Secret Service seems to think you are not. They say you are both American Secret Service men. Both Allied spies, playing a clever but desperate game. But this time you have gone too far. Never mind about them. Put your trust in me, I have found a way out. To-night I will come to your room, by then I shall know if my plans are working well."

That same evening the two Americans, waiting in their room with straining nerves, heard the expected knock at their

door. Greta had come as arranged. Her presence was not suspicious to any eyes that might have been watching. She was, according to *their* programme, playing Delilah.

The plan she unfolded to the two Americans seemed incredible!—impossible! Yet! they were in her hands. If she played them false—they died. If they carried on they died. What did it matter?

On the other hand if she were genuine, their mission was successful—successful beyond their wildest hopes.

"I have secured the help of two colonels of the General Staff," she said. Her eyes lit up as she told them and her breath came in short, sharp gasps of suppressed emotion.

"Both these men are traitors to the German cause. Never mind, it is all a game in war. Both say the Germans are beaten. It is only a question of time. They have seen the last confidential report given by you to Hindenburg.

"*They have the Secret Plans of the German operations. Plans that, in the hands of Foch, will crush their hopes.* What they want are terms. They want me to bring back the assurance to-night that these terms will be granted. First, protection from the revenge of the German Intelligence in any part of the world. Second, £100,000 as their price. The third condition is, immediate transportation to another country, America for preference. If you agree, I am to take your answer back. If it is in the affirmative they will get you away. *Here is their plan.*

"They will both accompany you through Germany to the lines of our Forces in the immediate face of your American battlefront, the excuse for your departure from here being that they are taking you both up so *that you can more easily be killed.* Their power is all-supreme. Nobody will challenge their authority."

"Greta," said the "Colonel," "for the first time I will speak to you in German—in your own language. I trust you! My comrade and I are in your hands. If you are playing a game, you win—but may the thought of your having taken our lives haunt you for ever. Give my word to these two officers that their terms are accepted. If we win through, we have served our country and the Allied cause as we said we should do. For you—well you must get through to Holland. As soon as we are gone—nay, two days before we go, make an excuse of some sort, but get over the frontier first. Otherwise, my heart would break to know that we were safe, and you were left behind, in all probability to die."

"Do not worry, beloved, I shall take this message to-night. They will not be ready to take you away for two days. It is agreed. I had that all planned out," she said.

"To-night I leave Coblenz upon a Spanish passport. My mission is to go to Paris to secure certain information. My departure will arouse no suspicion."

"You spoke to me in German. I knew you spoke my language," she said to the "Colonel." "Now I will answer in your own language—which is my mother tongue. I was born in New York, and educated in South America. I speak American, German and Spanish. So, my beloved—until we meet again—farewell."

The following morning the two colonels came to the hotel in company with Captain Schmidt.

"These two officers will take you to High Imperial Command at the Front. You are both to be asked *further questions*, as certain doubts have arisen that need explaining more fully.

"You will all start away in forty-eight hours from now, and I wish you two American gentlemen a pleasant journey. I shall not be required as your interpreter any longer. There are others in plenty at the front." That was the last seen of Captain Schmidt.

So the "Colonel" and the "Engineer" passed in due course out of Germany with their information.

The two German Staff Officers of the enemy High Command got over to the American lines in safety towards the end of June, 1918.

From July onwards the crash of the German Armies in France came with appalling swiftness. Foch, Pershing, Haig, and the King of the Belgians, smashing up their resistance upon all fronts.

In July, 1918, the American papers announced that two German war prisoners—the first ever sent to America, had landed in the United States from the S.S. *Agamemnon*. Beyond this, very little more notice was taken of the matter, American interest being centred upon the momentous happenings in Europe.

Somewhere in America to-day, two Germans, if living, know the truth of this story of a great espionage plot.

And somewhere in America Greta, the spy, and her husband the "Colonel" must sometimes talk of the days when Fate and espionage brought them together. Prince Joachim of Hohenzollern committed suicide in the Villa Leignitz, Potsdam, in 1927. I wonder did he ever learn the truth.

THE LAUGHING SOLDIER

By
MARTHE McKENNA

HEARING excited voices coming through the door of our back kitchen, I stood to listen, for in my dual rôle of nurse in the German military hospital at Roulers and spy in the British Intelligence Service it was my business to be interested in everything that happened around me.

Two German soldiers were talking excitedly to Bertha, our Flemish maid-of-all-work. One of the soldiers I knew as the "Clown." He called himself "Frederick the Great," and I knew he had appeared before several crowned heads of Europe as a first-class ventriloquist. His companion was known as "Silent Willie," because of his almost dumb silence. They were two decent, simple soldiers and fast comrades.

Mud-soiled, and with the grey look of men just returned from the trenches, the Clown was saying :

"Guess what I have, Bertha."

"How should I know?" countered Bertha, womanlike, burning with curiosity.

"We were in an attack yesterday on the British line at St. Julien," returned the Clown. "For two days our heavies pounded the Tommies—crump, cr-rump!" The Clown imitated the sound of a bursting shell to perfection. "Then, with a rush, over we went!"

Throwing his voice to another part of the room, he asked, in an assumed girlish voice, "And what found you there, my hero?" In his normal voice he replied, "We found the trenches empty of Tommies, but full of—what?"

"Oh, please do tell me, Freddie! I'm all of a works!" came the assumed girlish voice.

With a look of supreme importance, shaking free his trench-soiled haversack, he slowly unbuckled the straps and disclosed to the astonished gaze of Bertha a pure-white loaf of bread and four small tins of beef.

Again came the assumed girlish voice :

"And what are *your* spoils of war, comrade of Frederick the Great?"

Silent Willie reluctantly uncovered his booty. Three tins of ragout, a large tin of mutton, and another white loaf of bread were laid on the table.

Bertha looked with amazement at the white bread.

"It's snow-white," she said in a breathless, incredulous voice.

"Yes, and the meat's from a real cow! We know; we have sampled two tins already," encouraged the Clown.

"Oh!" said Bertha in a yearning tone. "Oh, how lucky!"

Striking his finest dramatic attitude, the Clown said to Bertha, in what I suppose was his best stage-voice:

"And, *mein Fräulein*, when the knights of old returned from the wars victorious they showered the spoils on the fair!" Saying which, he flashed out his bayonet, sliced his loaf in half, and handed one half to Bertha, together with two tins of beef.

I left my eavesdropping point of vantage and joined my mother in our private room.

A little while later a maddening smell of wholesome food, the like of which we had not experienced for many weary months, invaded our room.

Then a deep bass voice, coming apparently from under the door, asked:

"Mother, will you partake of the banquet? Real potatoes, real carrots, and real lamb. It is I, Frederick the Great, who swears it."

Laughingly mother and I gratefully accepted a portion of the Clown's loot.

Although I liked and knew I could trust our maid Bertha, I had never let her share my secret. She was just the type for a café—a bright, talkative girl, who unwittingly garnered vital information from the rank-and-file of the German troops in our important sector of the Front, and just as innocently passed it on to me. It was her custom to drop into my room after curfew and gossip about the day's happenings. Even when I finished late at the hospital, she would wait up so as to unburden herself. I usually let her wander on, taking mental notes of any useful information imparted during the day by grumbling and protesting soldiers who were wont to pour their troubles into the ears of the ever sympathetic Bertha.

Moreover, she was one of those girls who had an extraordinary retentive memory for gossip. She could faithfully remember and recount small things discussed days before. In many ways she would have been an invaluable ally. The opportunities which came her way for gathering information were legion, but in such a dangerous rôle I had to be ultra-careful in my choice of workers. A small slip or laughing error would mean a firing-squad for both.

The unwitting gossiper who divulges a secret, no matter how innocently, is just as dangerous as the cleverest *agent provocateur*. So I contented myself with just pumping our maid.

When the Clown and Silent Willie had departed, Bertha lost no time in joining me in my room. She commenced with her usual running comments on the day's occurrences—her troubles with the neighbours, the enormous price of food and other trivial annoyances. It has always appeared remarkable to me that even under the most distressing and depressing circumstances people and things *will* revert back to the ordinary way of life. Petty jealousies and the usual functions of every-day life, I suppose, saved most of us civilians from going insane during those terrible days.

After this steam had been allowed to escape, Bertha arrived at the topic which most interested me.

"Isn't it a shame," she said indignantly, "the Clown's company has got to go back to the trenches in two days. He told me," she continued, "that they have been in two small attacks during the last week, but that will be nothing to the great advance every one is expecting next time the company moves up the line. Guns upon guns are moving up, too, and the Clown says the poor Tommies will be blown back to London."

London was the same as England to Bertha.

This information confirmed my own discoveries made during the day at the hospital. The orders had been given for all movable cases to be evacuated immediately to back areas. An empty hospital meant advance. Empty—ready to be refilled with the tortured humanity who would pay the price for the attack. Huge stores of hospital material had arrived in the yard of the hospital. Ammunition trains replaced ration trains, and every one, soldier and civilian, would have to pull in their belts tighter still.

The signs were plain. Attack! Attack!

I felt tired and discouraged, and Bertha was prattling on.

Suddenly I was listening with breathless interest. That which she was disclosing now, so innocently, went to my brain like the shock of an electric current. It was news, and the key to all this preparation.

In some wonderful way I had long ago learned how to separate the grain from the chaff of countless rumours.

With every nerve terribly awake, I sat back and listened, certain that the track was the right one.

That morning three soldiers, not of the Wurtemburg Army (the army holding our sector), had entered the café.

Their hats were worn with an air sufficiently out of regula-

tion angle to draw an inquiring remark from the admiring Bertha.

Pointing to his perkily-placed hat, one said:

"That, Fräulein, means Bavarian. When the Prussian has dirty work to do he sends for the Bavarian. These Wurtemburgers are no good at the game we have to play."

Bertha's eyes must have been wide open with questioning and admiration, for one of the trio took up the story:

"Yes, Fräulein, the Prussian knows what's what. Behind the Rumbeke aerodrome we've been taking the Kemmel Hill from the Tommy every day for the last three weeks. Only in practice," he laughed. "But next week we go over to take it in earnest." They explained to the puzzled Bertha that the Kemmel Berg was a very desirable point of vantage in the English lines, and their brigade had been practising its capture on an exact model behind the aerodrome.

On leaving, one spat out, showing his contempt of all other units, "Ach, the Wurtemburgers! Ach, the Prussian!"

So Kemmel Hill, one of the vital keys of the Ypres salient, was to be the goal of the forthcoming attack. The exact timing of the attack did not worry me much, but the knowledge of the definite objective would be wonderful news for the eagerly waiting agents over the Dutch frontier.

A feint from our part of the salient, the eastern side, but on the western side, the Kemmel Hill, would fall the crushing, smashing blow to open up the way to the Channel ports. The principal artillery fire would come from our part of the salient.

Next morning I received a note:

Information urgently required regarding concentration of heavy artillery on eastern slopes of Passchendaele-Westroosebeke-Roulers Ridge. Allied observers unsighted.

Obviously the concentration of artillery and the rapid relief of line troops, I argued, appeared to point to one definite object: the complete capture of the Kemmel Hill position.

That night I duplicated my report, handed one in to the chemist's shop and another to an ordinary runner whm I knew I could also count upon. I added that I would do my best with regard to the gun positions.

As the reports were speeding to the frontier the Clown's company marched up to the trenches.

And now for the gun positions.

The Red Cross ambulance-driver Alphonse, my intrepid Alsatian confederate, practically every night drove his ambulance past the second line of trenches, almost up to Poelcappelle church, collecting the wounded from two posts,

the Spriet post and Poelcappelle post. The route he had to follow from Roulers drove flush through the area where the heavy artillery were taking up fresh positions, and in addition, he must pass through my old home village of Westroosebeke.

I was well acquainted with every square yard of the ground, for in carefree days, as a somewhat tomboyish young girl, I had bird's-nested with my brothers, and I knew every wood and coppice.

Some vague idea of accompanying Alphonse had entered my mind. Perhaps together, I thought, we could pick up some useful information. In the nature of things it could not be much, but every little would help, and, providing I could talk Alphonse round to my way of thinking, I could pay a visit to our old shattered homestead.

So to Alphonse I went.

He was tinkering with a battered, dilapidated ambulance.

" Alphonse," I said, " my relations over the frontier are very anxious to learn the new positions of the heavies on the Ridge." Sweeping my arm to indicate the ridge rising towards Passchendaele, I asked him, " Who is the medical officer at the Spriet post ? "

Alphonse stopped his work and silently regarded me for about ten seconds. This was a precaution of his. It allowed talkative people to continue when he did not desire to speak, and also gave him time to consider his short, pointed answers.

" Officer Umbret," Alphonse informed me.

" That's good," I returned cheerfully, trying not to notice Alphonse's stony look. " Officer Umbret and I are old friends. We worked together in the early days in the Convent of Westroosebeke when that building was improvised as a hospital."

I felt I was making a bad start with Alphonse, so I continued hurriedly as I saw him regarding me with considerable doubt and disapproval. I blurted out the first excuse that came into my mind.

" My mother is yearning for several little things we were forced to leave behind in Westroosebeke, so if your plundering countrymen have not already claimed them I would like to see what can be done about it."

Before his ten seconds were up I went on, " We didn't think much of them at the time, but they have become very valuable in these short times. So, Alphonse, when I'm as far as Westroosebeke, I'm sure you won't object to my going as far as the Spriet with you."

And I finished up with what I imagined was a bright voice, " If it's a fine, quiet night."

Flat refusal was on his set face.

"Sister," he said after his usual pause, "Westroosebeke is a ruin. Hardly a brick stands on a brick. You'll find nothing there. The Spriet post is near the second line, so you don't go with me. I've enough to do to look after this rotten wagon, without you coming and examining—er—houses. And I had enough the last time."

"Nevertheless, my dear Fritz," I answered, "I propose to foist myself on you to-night." I always called him Fritz to get him rattled. "Don't forget," I went on, "Westroosebeke was for months within a short distance of the first line, and I worked there night and day."

"It's different now, sister," he said earnestly. "Let me try and get you as much information as I can about the popguns."

I looked round, as our conversation had lasted longer than was prudent.

"Alphonse," I entreated, "I must come with you to-night. I know every inch of the countryside. Although you have travelled constantly up and down with your old machine, you don't know the district as I know it. Now, quick, Alphonse—do be reasonable. What time are you starting? Look, the whole yard is gazing at us. What time do you leave?"

"Five-thirty," he returned with deep misgiving. "I've to load up a few medical stores for the Spriet post."

"It's going to be a dirty night," shouted Alphonse as we chug-chugged along the Roulers-Westroosebeke road, through a fine drizzle that had just started.

I was inclined to believe him, so I pulled my cape closer around my shoulders and fastened to the dashboard the steel helmet Alphonse had thoughtfully handed to me as we left.

At Oostnieuwkerke a rumbling, roaring bark nearly shook me from my seat beside Alphonse. He turned to me and yelled in my ear, "Heavy mortars."

I nodded. They did mean business!

We groaned along a familiar road now, the road leading to my old home. The beautiful, tall, swaying trees along the roadside that I had known and loved in happier days were shattered skeleton stumps. The long straight roadway was pock-marked with shell-holes, and broken ends of twisted steel marked where the trams had puffed along in peace-time with lazy sloth. Alphonse seemed to have an uncanny sense for steering clear of all obstacles. He seemed to have cat's eyes.

The guns, large and small, barked and spat from every peace of cover, cutting the sky in lightning flashes. We passed ammunition limbers and ration-wagons going up with food for the guns and food for the humans, and now and again we passed ghostly columns of troops, helmets gleaming in the flashes. Near a small wood just before we reached the village Alphonse stopped and pretended to examine a back tyre. The guns in the wood barked with a frightening, crashing roar, the whole countryside seeming to quake. "Heavy howitzers," Alphonse explained as he jumped up to the steering-wheel again.

As we ran into Westroosebeke a strange silence seemed to fall on the Front.

The church, I saw, was a battered ruin of high-piled rubble.

I touched Alphonse on the arm, and he stopped. The broad, open main street that I remembered so well was only wide enough to allow two wagons to pass with difficulty, and the rubble of the destroyed houses had piled up along each side of the street to such a height that I had the impression of standing in a deep ravine. I scrambled up the side, and barbed wire and grotesque iron stakes tore at my arms and face. It was heartbreaking to gaze on what was once our smiling home. I had been prepared to see damage, but not for this utter ruin and desolation. Here and there stood a stunted gable-end of wall, standing stark against a lowering sky. Giant battlefield rushes pushed up ugly-shaped heads from huge shellholes which could hardly be distinguished from the wide, gaping cellars.

With a gasp I scrambled back to Alphonse, and in silence he drove on to the Passchendaele-Roulers cross-roads. The Ypres road leading to the Spriet post was camouflaged and was in a terrible state. After many protests from Alphonse's "wagon," we arrived on the top of a hump in the road. Alphonse stopped and pointed down into the valley at a dull red glow which lit up the sky. "Ypres," he said. We were looking down on the Allies' lines! Star-rockets piercing the blackness mounted to the sky in graceful curves.

A rattle and we commenced the descent to the Spriet post.

We were both very silent and set. We were before the guns and in the grip of the Front.

Arriving at our destination, Alphonse ran the ambulance as near as he could to the blind side of a much-scarred concrete dug-out. I followed him down three steps into a narrow, dirty trench, and as he lifted the matting flap of the dug-out door-

way a burst of machine-gun fire rattled out from seemingly just across the roadway, and a vicious ping-ping flitted overhead.

Officer Umbret was busy examining a wounded soldier. Alphonse walked up, saluted the officer, and handed his stores to an orderly who was staring in amazement, mouth wide open, at me.

"How many to go back, Herr?" asked Alphonse.

"Six," answered the doctor.

The doctor looked round, stared at me for a second or two in surprise, then recognised an old and willing helper. He turned again to the stricken man and continued rapidly his work of mercy.

It crossed my mind, I remember, that the whole scene stood as a symbol to me.

Everything was etched out in stark primitiveness. The deft actions of the doctor's hands as he worked away on the torn piece of humanity. Economy of words. Economy of action. There in the dim medical dug-out was life shorn of all frills and falsehood. There was nakedness and truth; men might destroy the world but they cannot destroy truth. We were all the same beings of yesterday, yet that strange "grip" made us creatures of another sphere, I thought.

My eyes becoming accustomed to the gloom of the dug-out, I looked round and saw lying in a corner on a stretcher some one I knew.

I walked over and bent down. "Hallo, Frederick. You weren't long getting a pass for the Fatherland," I said.

"Ach, I'm dreaming—or is it really you, Fräulein?" Satisfying himself that it was really me, he continued, "Yes, they got me, but I don't think it's very much. As soon as the company arrived last night I was detailed for a small patrol in 'No Man's Land.' We met a patrol of Tommies and there was a fight. I've got it here," pointing to his hip. "I couldn't move, and I must have been very near the Tommies' trenches, because I could hear them speaking nearly the whole night. Just before dawn the Silent One found me and dragged me in, right under the Tommies' noses. He'd been out four times looking for me. He doesn't say much, but I've hopes for him yet."

I smiled and said, "You'll be sent back to the Fatherland this time."

He shook his head, replying, "What would the company do without me? I'm hoping they put me in your hospital, Fräulein. I'd like to hang around and see the Silent One again."

"In any case," I encouraged him, "you are coming down to-night with us."

During our conversation the crump, crump of heavy shells shook and reverberated through the dug-out, and whilst the wounded were being loaded I had a few words with Officer Umbret. He looked very weary and said that as soon as his relief arrived he was going on leave. I wished him good luck and took my place beside Alphonse, who had started up his engine. I saw that the driver seemed very uneasy, for as we started off the Front commenced to boil up, the rattle of machine-guns and the sharp crack, crack of rifles swept along the trenches behind us. I felt very uneasy for the men in the ambulance, as the bumping on the awful apology for a road was terrible.

A bombardment suddenly fell on the cross-roads of the Ypres-Westroosebeke route—the road we must pass. From the bottom of the hill we could see the flashes and almost see the earth heaving up as crash after crash rent the heavens. Alphonse leaned towards me and shouted, "It's moving towards us! Put on the helmet!"

We were half-way up the incline, when we both heard a wailing cry for help from the ditch running along the exposed side of the roadway. A deafening roar and blinding crash just behind us, and I got the putrid smell of high-explosive. The ground shook and heaved, but Alphonse, with unerring instinct, drove his ambulance beside a large heap of rubble from a demolished farmhouse and stopped.

"We are just as well here," he shouted in the din, "until this passes!"

"Drive on! Drive on!" a screaming voice yelled from the ambulance, awful in its panic-stricken intensity.

Then again, in a lull, we heard the horrible cry for help just along the road.

With a muttered, "I'm going," Alphonse scrambled down from his seat, and I hurriedly followed, both making for the sound of the cry.

Seeing I was with him, Alphonse pulled me down into the ditch on the leeside of the road, and we both crawled along, barbed wire tearing at us at every move.

"He's on the other side," called Alphonse; and, as a clearer cry came, "He's there."

The shells were bursting just across the road, but Alphonse, with the quickness of a panther, dashed over and, throwing himself flat beside the wounded man, called back:

"Stay where you are. We're all right here; we're in a freshly made shellhole. Wait until this passes."

I waited, and the shelling appeared to die down.

"Can you come over?" Alphonse asked. "I can't manage him alone."

Bent double, I ran over the road, and found Alphonse bandaging a German officer's leg, which was covered with blood.

"Try to help him on to my back. He won't feel it; he's unconscious," commanded Alphonse.

I helped him, but as we started across the road the shelling came on with redoubled fury. I felt deadly faint and weary as I held the form of the officer on the back of the sturdy Alphonse.

How we scrambled back to the ambulance I never remember. All that I recollect is trying with a last effort to help Alphonse lift our added burden on to the floor of the ambulance. Then I collapsed.

A little while later I came to, and Alphonse informed me that the frightfulness was over. The road began to show signs of life again. Limbers and wagons passed, so our driver, with a cheerful grin, left our heaven-sent heap of rubble, and we crawled back towards Roulers.

Just before we arrived in Roulers, Alphonse asked, "Sister, do you feel up to hearing good news?"

I nodded.

Jerking his thumb back towards the interior of the ambulance, he said, "The man we picked up to-night is an officer of artillery." He drove on for some moments in silence, and the full significance did not at first strike me. Then, like a cold shower, his meaning struck.

Without Alphonse saying, "I've got all his maps," I understood.

Alphonse leaned towards me and whispered, "He's from Army Headquarters Staff, and his two orderlies were killed up there by his side. You'll have every one of your gun-positions to-morrow afternoon. I'll have copies made before I hand in his effects."

I could only nod my thanks.

My mother was terribly upset at my distressed state, and I had to promise her faithfully not to repeat the trip.

True to his word, next day Alphonse handed me the copies, and I at once sent them "over" in sections.

I anxiously awaited the starting of the attack, but "Man proposes . . ." and the rain which came down in torrents delayed it for a more propitious occasion.

I visited the Clown once, and found that his wound was not at all serious. He was up to his usual pranks.

His ward was always in an uproar with his ventriloquist tricks.

He came one day to the café with Silent Willie, whose company was out resting, waiting for the rain to finish for the attack on Kemmel.

Bertha and I were in the kitchen as the comrades stole in by the back entrance.

"Ha, Bertha! Now that we are in hospital, we have to be careful of the feld-gendarmes. I can disguise my voice but not myself," was the Clown's greeting.

Then, "How has the Silent One behaved himself while I've been away?"

Silent Willie looked glummer than usual, but the Clown, I saw, was bubbling over with excitement.

"Are you not going back to Germany?" asked Bertha.

"No," he answered, looking towards me.

An invisible force seemed to draw us together. We were blood-comrades now, for had we not suffered together "in front of the guns"? Before, I was just the ordinary civilian, he the despised "knub," but now the awful Front had placed us on a level.

The Clown and the Spy, I thought, with a shiver.

"A cushy Base job for Frederick the Great in future," he explained with glee. "No more trenches for me; I'm going to be clever. I'll tell you. There's an Army Circus coming to the town to give a couple of performances, and as soon as I heard about it I routed out the officer in charge of the advance party and asked him if he could place me in the show.

"'What can you do?' he asked, like a Prussian drill-sergeant.

"So I gave him the cat-and-dog fight underneath his feet." At this point the Clown gave such a realistic display of his powers that Bertha caught hold of a broom, thinking the room was invaded.

"He jumped about three metres back," said the Clown, laughing. "I gave him a few other samples, and had his orderlies running on all kinds of stupid errands, until at last he had me escorted from the field. But not before I had his promise of a trial."

Looking at me appealingly, he asked, "You'll come, Fräulein, won't you? I, Frederick the Great, promise you the hour of your life! If the rain holds off, a performance is to be given to-morrow."

His eyes gleamed with excitement as he pictured himself again in the centre of the arena, the sawdust under his feet

and a laughing, helpless audience in the palms of his hands.

Army concerts were held every quiet day in Roulers, but the civilian left them severely alone. I had heard of the coming of the circus, but it had never entered my head to go there. I knew a large tent had been erected some little distance from the town.

"Will you try to be there, Fräulein?" pleaded the Clown.

The idea of the circus certainly appealed to me more than the crude, obscene Army concert parties. What is it in the magic name of "circus" that draws mankind? I knew it would be a circus without animals; perhaps a few comic made-up beasts. But the tent, the arena circle, the sawdust and the beautiful horses with the tossing manes, all have an appeal older than time itself.

But this was *not* the reason why I promised the Clown. *Such a gathering of widely different units would present a golden opportunity of discovering if any new reinforcements had arrived in the district. By keeping my eyes open I could obtain more information in half an hour than I could in days through the usual channels.*

So I promised that if I heard of any other civilians going I would go too. He could hardly contain himself, saying over and over again, "A Base job in future for Freddie," and then, in the voice of his company commander, he went through all the drill instructions.

"No more of that for me," he said exultantly.

We laughed, and were glad for his sake, but Silent Willie looked on without saying a word.

The day broke fine and dry, and as things were rather quiet at the hospital I had no difficulty in obtaining a pass from the Oberartz.

Some kilometres from the town a large tent with the usual effects had been erected, and the only danger would come from chance Allied aeroplane raiders.

I walked up, so as not to make myself too conspicuous, and found that a few favoured civilians had been allowed in.

The Clown's company were there to a man, to cheer and cheer their favourite on to the "Base job."

The "turns" were good. Trick-riding, comic donkey eating comic lion, acrobats, and then "Frederick the Great."

He jumped into the arena dressed as a clown, white-faced, red-nosed; the soldier forgotten, here was the Master. Frederick the Great had entered his kingdom.

A shrieking shell whined over the tent. Every one ducked, including the General and his staff.

The Clown laughed. It's a favourite trick of his.

The famous cat-and-dog fight takes place between the legs of the stout bespectacled bandmaster.

In a few moments he has the audience helpless with laughter with his cheeky imitations.

Cheer after cheer, and Frederick the Great has made his mark.

In the evening Silent Willie and the Clown sat in the kitchen. The glum one regarded with doglike devotion his expansive comrade as he gloated over the Base job which had been offered to him by the officer commanding the circus. The Clown had asked for, and had already received, his discharge from the hospital.

"I'm going back now to the hospital to collect my kit, Bertha," the Clown said, but, with a puzzled air, added, "The show has orders to move off to-morrow. Why so soon I don't know. They speak of going as far back as Ghent."

"Ah!" I thought. "The attack. Such frivolous things as circuses are not required about the area when serious events are afoot."

Sitting in my room the same night, Bertha crept in and said:

"The Silent One is in the kitchen. He has only spoken once, and that was to tell me that his company are 'falling-in' in half an hour, to go up the line."

Here was confirmation of my suspicions!

I hurriedly wrote out a short report, warning the agent that an attack could be expected at any hour on the Kemmel Berg, adding that four new machine-gun battalions had moved into the district. I gave the numbers and all particulars that I had been able to discover at the circus.

My hospital "late pass" would enable me to make the journey to the little chemist's shop across the square without much danger, enabling my precious news to "cross over" immediately.

I crept down the stairs to steal out at the back entrance, but as I reached the dark passage that led past the kitchen I heard a shuffling noise, and the latch of the back door lifted with a rattle. I stood flat up against the wall as a dark form entered the passage-way. It made straight for the kitchen, and with a gasp of relief I recognised the familiar form of the Clown.

Noiselessly I slipped up to the door and peeped in. Silent Willie was sitting near the long Flemish stove, looking, if possible, more despondent than ever. The Clown was standing with his back towards me. He had his full pack on his

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back, with rifle slung, and all his trench equipment, gas-mask and steel helmet.

"Ach," he was saying, "I can't go, Silent One. What would the company do without me? Without Frederick the Great? I'm coming up with you to-night." And he strode across to Silent Willie and gave the glum one a great slap across his back.

With a lump in my throat I almost turned back, but with a sob and a noiseless rush I was out of the house.

For the second time my warning "went over" as the Clown marched up the line.

One night two weeks afterwards I learned that the attack on Kemmel never got a chance. It never got farther than its own trenches, and as I lay tossing in my bed thinking, thinking, I bit my bedclothes in anguish.

Oh, God! Oh, God! I thought. How long the necessity?

For the Clown and Silent Willie never came back.

THE SAILOR FROM ALSACE

By

HECTOR C. BYWATER

In 1913 Prussia was ruled by the military caste, and since Prussia, despite the nominal independence of Saxony, Bavaria and Württemberg, held the reins of power in the Confederation, it is not an exaggeration to say that Germany as a whole was governed on Prussian military lines. This fact goes far to explain the crude and overbearing nature of her foreign policy, which for years before the war had been a constant threat to the peace of the world.

In her domestic as in her external affairs she rode rough-shod over the rights of the weak. Her subjects of alien blood, the Poles, the Danes and, above all, the French of Alsace-Lorraine, were ruled with an iron hand. Germany aspired to become a great colonial Power, yet she never learned to govern her own people except by the methods of the barrack-yard.

On November 10, 1913, a riot broke out at Zabern, an Alsatian town lying between Strasbourg and Metz. A day or two earlier Lieutenant von Forstner, whose regiment formed part of the local garrison, had told a recruit that if he used his bayonet against a " Wacke "—a derogatory slang expression for a native of Alsace—he need not fear punishment ; on the contrary, the lieutenant would reward him with half a sovereign. A German sergeant, wishful to curry favour with his superior officer, promised to increase the reward by three shillings.

The recruit, of course, did not keep the good news to himself, and it was speedily known all over the town. Local papers took the matter up as a gross insult to the whole population of Alsace, as indeed it was. When the military authorities refused to issue either a denial or a correction of the story, popular feeling ran high in Zabern. Some days later a large crowd gathered in front of a house where von Forstner was paying a visit, and became so menacing that he telephoned for protection. Two soldiers with loaded rifles were sent to escort the hero back to barracks.

Towards evening the crowd swelled to over a thousand. It jeered and hooted at the sight of a uniform, and threatened to lynch von Forstner. Firemen called out to disperse the

number of orders had been issued from the office of the commanding General, and also from the regiment, that we were to act vigorously and stand no nonsense."

Colonel von Reuter, commanding the 99th Regiment, was then called. He said he had heard that officers of his regiment, and Lieutenant von Forstner in particular, had been insulted in the street. Local papers had published statements for which there was no foundation. "Dirty" anonymous letters had been received by himself and von Forstner. In these circumstances he had instructed his officers to act with all possible energy, and as Lieutenant von Forstner had been insulted in a peculiar degree he had advised him always to carry his pistol and, in case of need, to use either his pistol or his sword.

These weapons, it is to be noted, were to be used not against Germany's enemies, but against German citizens living on German soil. The incongruity of the orders he gave seems never to have occurred to the mediæval mind of this typical Prussian Junker. His further evidence was still more illuminating.

"I had told my officers," he proceeded, "that they stood the risk of being brought before a court of honour if, at the appropriate moment, they failed to act as I had ordered them to do. I also told my N.C.O.'s and men that if they were attacked they were to make energetic use of their weapons and, if necessary, 'to bring down' their assailants."

This might fairly be interpreted as an order to shoot or bayonet to death any civilian, preferably Alsatian, who had the temerity to resist or even, perhaps, to look askance at the sacred uniform. Colonel von Reuter added that he had informed the Burgomaster of Zabern of his instructions to his officers "to compel respect in all circumstances." Apparently, therefore, the suppression of disorder was quite a minor consideration. It was chiefly to uphold the dignity of the army that rifles and bayonets were to be energetically used.

In the course of the trial evidence was given that Blank, the crippled cobbler, had never attempted to attack any one. It was also testified that the soldiers, as they marched through the village, were singing an indecent ditty at the top of their voices.

Much to the disgust of the military diehards, von Forstner was found guilty and sentenced to forty-three days' imprisonment. The prison sentence was made necessary by the conviction of wounding; otherwise, he would have received the mild penalty of detention in a fortress, which carries no stigma. As it was, he had to leave the army.

Such, then, is the story of the cobbler of Zabern, who thanks to the brutality of a young Prussian jack-in-office became an international figure. But to this story there is a most dramatic sequel which has not hitherto been made public. It shows that Germany had to pay dearly for that act of violence on the part of Lieutenant von Forstner.

At the time of the events described above a young Alsatian from Strasbourg was staying with relatives in the country. Ludwig Franz—that was not his real name—was a quiet, studious youth who was expecting to be called up for his military service. His father was a native of Alsace, but his mother was a Frenchwoman passionately attached to the country of her birth. She detested the Prussians, and hardly troubled to conceal the fact. There is little doubt that she was the dominant influence in her son's life.

Young Franz happened to be in Dettweiler when the cobbler was arrested ; in fact, he appears to have narrowly escaped the same fate, for he was in the group of people that scattered when von Forstner ordered his men to " lay hold of those damned scoundrels." He saw the wretched cripple cut down wantonly by the officer, and dragged bleeding into the Burgomaster's office, while soldiers with fixed bayonets stood on guard before the entrance. With other fugitives he sought shelter in one of the village taverns, and probably joined in the curses which filled the room. For in Dettweiler and the surrounding country that day popular feeling ran so high that it would have been dangerous for any uniformed Prussian to venture out alone.

If Ludwig Franz, thanks to his mother's teaching, had chafed under the Prussian yoke before, he was now transformed into an implacable enemy of the State to which by law he owed allegiance. There is some evidence that on his return to Strasbourg he sought acquaintance with certain people whom the police suspected of being French secret agents. Be that as it may, he was soon called up for service, and on choosing the navy in preference to the army he was sent to Wilhelmshaven for training.

There, no doubt, he had some further unpleasant experience of Prussian methods, for the warrant and petty officers of the navy did not believe in coddling raw recruits, to whom kicks and blows formed part of the training routine. In the last few years before the war numerous cases of gross brutality to young seamen were ventilated in the German Press.

In September, 1914, Franz was posted to the Naval Corps which was being organised for garrison and field service in Flanders. He spent several months at Bruges, and it was

here that he must have made his first contact with the Allied espionage service. The circumstances are not known, but in March, 1915, he was regularly supplying information to the French Intelligence people in Belgium. Unlike the majority of the secret agents who were employed by the Allies, he did his work solely from motives of hatred. More than once he refused the comparatively large sums that were offered to him when he had turned in information of high value. He would take money only for expenses, chiefly incurred in plying with liquor such of his "comrades" as were likely to drop useful hints when they were in a mellow mood.

Franz showed exceptional talent for his self-appointed task. Since he never troubled to conceal his anti-Prussian bias from his messmates, he was regarded by them as an outspoken but straightforward grumbler who would be the last man in the world to engage in secret intrigue. Not infrequently he received minor punishment for talking too loudly about his grievances, and this fact, besides gaining him sympathy with the rank and file, confirmed his reputation as a hot-headed babbler. It is the silent and secretive man who attracts suspicion. As for Franz, his superior officers would have laughed at the idea of his being dangerous in any way.

But the French Intelligence chiefs could have told another story. They obtained from him remarkably accurate reports on the German dispositions in Flanders, movements of troops, the location of dumps, and many other subjects of vital importance. He was the first to report the construction of concrete bomb-proof shelters for U-boats at Bruges, of which he gave an exact description. Thanks to his timely warning Allied aircraft were enabled to interfere with this work, though eventually it was completed. He is also said to have given away the position of the 15-in. gun which threw its huge shells into Dunkirk with monotonous regularity during the greater part of the war.

In the early summer of 1915 Franz was sent to the Ypres front, and was lost sight of for over a year. He was presumed to have been killed, much to the regret of the Allied Secret Service, which had ranked him as one of their "aces." There was therefore great rejoicing when touch with him was regained in July, 1916. The news came through an agent at Kiel. It appeared that Franz had been badly wounded in the fighting near Ypres, and after spending three months in hospital had, at his own request, been released from the Naval Corps in Flanders to serve again in the fleet.

How this contact was re-established makes an interesting story in itself. At that time the Allies had several agents

among the crews of the Danish vessels that carried potatoes to Kiel and other German ports in the Baltic. One of these men, in British employ, was introduced to Franz by a German go-between, a fact which suggests that the young Alsatian had been showing symptoms of disaffection obvious enough to attract the notice of those who were looking for Secret Service recruits in the ranks of the German Navy itself.

But when Franz was approached he did not display any enthusiasm at the idea of working for England. His sympathies were wholly with France, and it took a deal of argument to convince him that he would be serving that country equally well by giving Britain information about German naval movements.

Here I may interpolate that while the French authorities did occasionally hunt for enemy naval secrets, their main interest lay in purely military affairs, and they were quite content to leave the gathering of naval news to our people. But Franz was never quite happy with his new employers, who sometimes found it necessary to use a French intermediary to extract information from him.

For a considerable time he served in the battleship *Posen* of the First Squadron, High Seas Fleet. During this period he gave us valuable news about the fleet in general, the state of its ships and equipment, and its training methods. On one occasion he accurately forecast, a week beforehand, the day and hour at which his particular squadron was to weigh anchor for a sortie into the Bight, but through no fault of his own the news was delayed in transmission.

In December, 1916, Franz was drafted to the submarine service. At this date Germany was preparing for her tremendous U-boat offensive early in the following year, and as there were not nearly enough volunteers to man the numerous new submarines that were approaching completion, a large number of ratings were "borrowed" from the battle squadrons to undergo training at the U-boat school in Kiel.

Sharp eyes and ears, coupled with a high standard of intelligence, made Franz an invaluable agent. Moreover, we knew him to be trustworthy, for while the hireling may betray his paymasters, the man who works solely from motives of love or hate may usually be trusted to run straight, having no temptation to do otherwise. It would be tampering with the facts to present Franz as anything more than a unit in the vast Intelligence system which kept the British Admiralty so closely apprised of German U-boat movements,

but he was certainly a very important unit. He not only gave us information about new submarines and novel methods of attack and defence, but his reports were directly responsible for the mysterious disappearance of more than one U-boat that sallied forth to sink and destroy.

Candour compels the admission that by this time he was less disinterested than of yore, and certainly less discreet. He no longer refused pay for his services ; on the contrary, he began to ask for larger sums, and in view of his excellent work these were paid without demur. But long immunity had made him careless. On being transferred to Wilhelmshaven he took to himself a sweetheart, and in moments of intimacy confided to her things which he would have done better to keep to himself. Whether or not this girl informed against him will never be known, but it is beyond doubt that an Allied agent who was then acting as a link between Franz and a higher authority was arrested soon after a meeting with the Alsatian. As the agent was never heard of again, he was presumed to have been executed as a spy.

That Franz himself was knowingly responsible for this grim episode is most improbable. He had nothing to gain by double-dealing, nor was there anything in his previous career to suggest that he was capable of such conduct. But towards the end he had become overfond of wine and women, and when under their influence his tongue wagged too freely. By this time, in fact, he had been marked down in the Intelligence files as " unreliable."

But the British, unlike some of the Allies, never betrayed a secret agent who had ceased to be useful. Franz was warned that talkativeness would be his undoing ; his pay was reduced, and our *liaison* men in Germany took the most elaborate precautions whenever they approached him, which was now but seldom. Nevertheless, his hatred of Prussia flamed as fiercely as ever, fanned as it was, no doubt, by the harsh and arrogant demeanour of many of the German naval officers towards their subordinates. To him they were replicas of von Forstner, the bully of Zabern, the oppressor of the helpless peasants of Alsace, who since the outbreak of war had been forced to fight for their alien masters and driven to the shambles in their thousands—or so he wrote in one of his impassioned and indiscreet letters.

Since the only present means of damaging Prussia was to betray her war secrets to the enemy, he continued his work with unabated zeal, and although the man himself was no longer trusted, his reports still contained most valuable information. But his course was nearly run, and the end came in

circumstances so dramatic that one would hesitate to relate them were they not the simple truth.

Franz was now a leading seaman, specially trained in torpedo work. He had made several voyages in submarines for training purposes, but had not yet served in a "front line" boat. In July, 1917, he was drafted to one of the boats operating with the Flanders flotilla. Back at Bruges he again got into touch with Allied secret agents, whom he kept well posted on the submarine movements which came under his observation. Two or three months later he reported, well in advance, that two UC minelaying boats would be leaving Zeebrugge on a given date to sow their mines in the English Channel. This information was received in ample time for a counter-attack to be prepared. The two submarines duly sailed.

Four days afterwards a British submarine was patrolling at dawn on her "beat" in the Channel. As enemy U-boats had been reported as likely to be in that vicinity, a specially vigilant watch was kept, but the night had passed without incident. The captain, muffled to the eyes against the bitter cold, took a last look round before going below for some hot coffee. Still nothing to be seen but grey clouds and a leaden sea—but what was that!

Away off on the starboard bow a momentary flicker of white, then another, and behind it an almost invisible shape, darker than the grey background of sea and sky against which it was moving perceptibly. A U-boat beyond doubt, betrayed either by the creaming foam of her conning-tower as she surfaced after a night on the bottom, or by her bow wave as she forged slowly ahead.

Inside the British submarine the klaxons blared. The conning-tower hatch slammed as the captain dropped down the ladder, and the boat went under in a crash dive. Had the enemy seen anything? If so, he too would instantly seek safety in the depths, and the chance of an attack would be missed, for submarines under water cannot play blind man's buff.

The British boat straightened out after her dive, and then, very cautiously, the periscope was raised, with the captain at the eyepiece. One glance, and down came the periscope. It was all right. The German U-boat had obviously seen nothing, for it was still on the surface and had not altered its course. A few minutes later its grey bows slid into view across the sighting wires of the periscope, and two torpedoes set for high speed leaped from the bow tubes of the British boat.

A sheet of flame shooting skyward, a thunderous crash,

and then silence. The periscope was raised, but the sea was no longer tenanted. Two dead bodies, a splintered wooden grating, and a canvas dinghy with a gaping hole in its side, these were the only souvenirs of the UC—and her crew. No one guessed that one of the corpses entombed in the riven hull that lay in twenty fathoms of water was that of Ludwig Franz, the young Alsatian who had served the Allies as a secret agent for nearly three years!

This extraordinary fact was disclosed when, months later, the German casualty lists were analysed by Intelligence experts. It was then possible to reconstruct the grim story by piecing together scraps of information from an agent in Bruges and other sources. A day or two after sending his last report Franz had been suddenly transferred from his own submarine to one of the UC minelayers detailed for the Channel expedition. He had no opportunity of letting us know, and even had he done so it would have been too late, for the British hunting pack was already unleashed.

In furnishing us with minute details of the cruise which the UC—— was to undertake Franz had literally signed his own death-warrant, for it was due to this information that the U-boat was torpedoed and sunk with all hands. But although in the end his own life was forfeit, he had terribly avenged the persecutors of his people.

THE GRAND DUKE

By

LIEUT. A. BAUERMEISTER

ONE day an elegant gentleman in a trench coat visited my assistant, with a request for a private interview with me. By way of precaution my assistant searched him for hidden weapons.

"I fully appreciate the need for these safety measures," said the stranger equably. He was, in fact, unarmed.

He introduced himself to me as "Captain N., of the General Staff." * After explaining that he hated the international Bolsheviks from the depths of his heart, he offered his services to me as an agent. "Please don't misunderstand me," he added. "I should naturally have refused indignantly and resolutely to spy against a Tsarist Russia. But now things are quite different. The Bolsheviks have destroyed Russia ; they are massacring the intelligentsia, exterminating the old corps of officers. Have you heard of the ghastly executions of Generals Rennenkampf, Russki, and Radko-Dmitriev ? Do you know that in the Government of Vologda and Archangel these beasts in human form have impaled hundreds of priests alive on pointed stakes ? That at Kronstadt hundreds of naval officers, bound together with barbed wire, were thrown into the sea ? That thousands of absolutely innocent people, men, women and even children, have been executed merely because they were not proletarians by birth ? No crime is too horrible for the people who have done these things. I want to enter your service in order that I may injure these alien usurpers wherever I can. Being employed in the highest military circles I can, without a doubt, furnish you with valuable information."

I paid this Staff Captain a wage that was absurdly small in comparison with the value of his reports. He was unquestionably the most important spy of the whole war. During the following months he supplied, by means of weekly reports, the most complete and minutely detailed description of the Red Army, then being formed. No other agent of the war period had anything like the same opportunities for collecting material. Officers who were at that time attached

* For obvious reasons I have withheld his real name.

to the Foreign Armies' Department at German G.H.Q. will assuredly corroborate this statement.

By means of letters written in invisible ink he reported to me every week until December, 1918. Thanks to him we had a complete knowledge of the organisation and fighting power of the Red Army down to the uttermost detail. In contrast to the numerous "super-spies" whose imaginary exploits have been lauded since the war, and who either did not exist at all or were occupied with quite unimportant work, Staff Captain N. was in the literal sense of the phrase the master spy of the Great War.

As I have already said, one must not shrink from using any means to promote the welfare of the Fatherland. This notwithstanding, I personally never made use of what I may call "terrorist" methods, nor did any other German Intelligence Officer. But the enemy's Intelligence people viewed the matter in a different light.

They enlisted in their service one of the most notorious of the Russian terrorists, the adventurer Boris Savinkov, who in association with the infamous Asef had already caused the murder of the Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovitch and the Minister von Plehve.

With the object of provoking us into breaking off diplomatic relations with Moscow and thus compelling us to retain German forces in the East, the social-revolutionary fighting organisation controlled by Boris Savinkov contrived the assassination first of the German Ambassador, Count Mirbach, and, shortly afterwards, of Field-Marshal von Eichhorn.

But these cowardly murders failed of their purpose. Rightly appreciating the facts of the affair, which we knew to be the work of Entente agents, we made no change in our military policy.

In the course of the war I was frequently approached by reckless men who offered to commit such deeds. Not long after the execution of poor Genia,* Felix volunteered to assassinate the Tsar while the latter took his daily constitutional in Mogileff. He proposed to disguise himself as a poor peasant presenting a petition, and then with a bomb under each arm to hurl himself at the Tsar's feet, perishing with his victim in the explosion.

I explained to Felix, however, that such an assassination could only do us harm. Were the Tsar to be murdered it was certain that the Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolaievitch, the most implacable anti-German in all Russia, would again

* See the story entitled *Love and Espionage*, p. 77.

become commander-in-chief. Some months later Felix offered to murder General Brussiloff in the same fashion. But again I declined the proposal.

"First of all I should lose you, my most daring agent; and, secondly, Brussiloff is a nonentity in the military sense. If he were removed it is highly probable that some more competent man would take his place, and then we should only be worse off than before."

One day at Reval a young girl belonging to the best St. Petersburg society came to see me. She told me that with her mother she had fled from St. Petersburg after the Bolsheviks had shot her father and her brother, and she then offered to shoot Lenin for me if I would indemnify her mother with 20,000 marks (£1,000).

The plan she proposed was a good one, and seemed to be entirely practicable. But I explained to her that we were not in the least interested.

"I am speaking to you as a German, Nadeshda Pavlovna," I said. "If Lenin were to be murdered the Bolsheviks might possibly fall. But in their place would come a Government which would again declare war against Germany. You will therefore see that however much we may detest him and his fellows, we are not concerned to have Lenin murdered."

Not long after this episode a fanatical old social-revolutionary came and offered to shoot the People's Commissary, Trotsky-Bronstein. Him, too, I told that I would not pay a farthing for such an attempt, because it would not do the slightest good to the German cause, even in a military sense.

One day I was called up by the Intelligence Officer, Captain M., who requested that, in connection with a very interesting matter, I should be at Reval railway station next day when the express from Narva arrived, in order to receive a colonel of the Russian General Staff who was coming from St. Petersburg.

Great was my astonishment when Captain M. got out of the train accompanied by a man dressed as a peasant, in whom, despite his disguise, I at once recognised the elegant Staff Colonel D., of St. Petersburg.

It was in every respect a smart enterprise. Colonel D. held a responsible post as General Staff officer in the St. Petersburg military area. He reminded me in many ways of the Russian General Staff Captain N. whom I have already mentioned. He, too, had entered the Bolshevik service—as a fanatical nationalist—with the object of combating and

smashing Bolshevism. While outwardly in Bolshevik service, he was actually the confidential agent of a Russian monarchist group in the St. Petersburg military zone.

A party of pro-German Russian monarchists had got into touch with the Grand Duke Pavel Alexandrovitch, who lay under arrest in St. Petersburg. Their plan was to overthrow Bolshevism with Germany's help, to conclude a Russo-German alliance, and to proclaim the Grand Duke as Chief Executive of Russia. After repeated solicitations the Grand Duke had given his assent to the plan, and Colonel D. had therefore been commissioned to convey this proposal to German G.H.Q., bringing with him a letter in the Grand Duke's handwriting which he had secreted between the sole of the boot on his right foot.

It would serve no purpose now to indulge in speculations as to whether we acted rightly or wrongly in this matter. The fact remains that Colonel D. went back a deeply disappointed man. The German Government had found itself unable to decide upon acceptance of the proposal. The decisive factor may well have been the critical situation on the Western front. This was taxing our resources to the very last man, and we had no reserves available to undertake big commitments in the East.

Unfortunately, in this particular case too many people were let into the secret, and the affair was betrayed. The tragic sequel was related to me soon afterwards by the Cheka Commissary for Special Service, Antonoff. His story was as follows :

The St. Petersburg Cheka learned through a French agent in Berlin that negotiations had taken place between the German Government and the imprisoned Grand Duke Pavel Alexandrovitch with a view to overthrowing the Bolsheviks and restoring the Russian monarchy. In consequence of this, the head of the Cheka, Dsiershinski, immediately ordered the Grand Duke to be shot.

The Grand Duke Pavel Alexandrovitch had been some months in prison, and was seriously ill. His weakness now was such that he lay all day and night on his bed, unable to stand.

Accompanied by several Cheka officials, the governor of the prison, Egoroff, entered the cell. With difficulty the Grand Duke sat up and surveyed his visitors.

" Citizen Romanoff ! " exclaimed the governor ; " you have been convicted of espionage on behalf of Germany. It has been proved that you made a proposal to the German Emperor that the Bolshevik Government be overthrown by

force of arms. You have therefore been sentenced to death. Who are your accomplices ? "

To this the Grand Duke, who for weeks past had daily expected such an end, replied without the slightest tremor :

" As a man of honour I refuse to answer your questions ! Or do you take me for a traitor ? I have been waiting for this for weeks. So get it over quickly ! "

Two Chekists with pock-marked faces seized the Grand Duke by the arms and led him out of the cell. In the courtyard the executioner, with a heavy army revolver in his hand, was already waiting, and with him were four other Chekists. The Grand Duke was dragged across the courtyard to the place of execution, where he was placed in a chair.

" Give me time to say a short prayer," he requested the governor of the prison.

With his head bowed in his hands the Grand Duke began to pray. Absorbed in his devotions he did not hear the executioner step behind him and level the heavy army revolver at the back of his head.

A short, sharp detonation, which was audible in the other cells of the prison. Although this dread sound was heard several times a day, some no doubt crossed themselves and murmured a prayer.

With his skull shattered the Grand Duke pitched forward into the sand. He had died instantly.

Where he was buried no one knows.

The next night five motor lorries, loaded with corpses, drove out of the city. The dead were hastily buried beyond the confines of the city.

A PRE-WAR SPY STORY

By
EDWIN T. WOODHALL

THIS story comes from late enemy sources. The narrator is an ex-highly-placed German Military officer, in fact he was the Chief of the German Intelligence Department during the War, Colonel W. Nicolai, and his views on Secret Service work are undoubtedly the most authoritative that will ever be written from the enemy point of view. The story is translated in a most masterly manner from the German work by Mr. George Renwick, F.R.G.S., and it concerns Colonel Redl, who was undoubtedly the master spy of pre-war Europe. I feel sure it will interest readers of this volume to hear the full story of that Austrian officer's astounding career of treachery.

In a Prague newspaper on Monday, 26th May, 1913, there appeared the report of a football match which had been played on the previous day. This stated :

> "Football in Prague.—Storm I. *v.* Union V. Score 5—7 (Half-time : 3—3). Storm I. was the weaker team because of the absence of Wagner and Marck. Atja alone was not strong enough to withstand the opposition he had to face."

Certainly it was a scrappy report, for it was written in his annoyance by the defeated team's captain, who was one of the sub-editors of the paper. Yet with these few lines of small print the story begins of the most vivid and sensational espionage drama of recent years.

In the heart of gay Vienna certain tragic events had rushed to an appallingly sudden climax during the latter part of a Saturday and the early hours of a Sunday morning.

Ten people in all Austria know the full story : the Commander-in-Chief of the Austrian Army, General Conrad von Hoetzendorff, the highest officers of the Austrian Secret Service and of the War Office, and the chief officials of the Vienna police. The greatest possible precautions were taken to keep the matter secret ; each of the ten persons was sworn to secrecy. Even the Emperor Francis Joseph and the heir

to the throne, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand (whose assassination at Sarajevo about a year later was one of the first actual portents of the Great War) were to be kept in the dark. But all the precautions failed because a full-back was absent from his place on a playing-field in Prague.

The captain of Storm I. on Monday afternoon called on football friend Wagner (a locksmith by trade) to inquire why he had not put in an appearance at the match.

" It was quite impossible for me to be there," said Wagner to his captain.

" The Military sent for me."

" And what did they want ? "

" Oh ! I had to break open some locks—a good few locks, indeed—in an officer's house."

So Wagner told the whole story, little thinking it had any importance.

In the presence of the Commander of the Prague Army Corps, General Baron von Giesl, and several high officers, who had apparently come from Vienna, he had to force his way into a house—he believed it was a general's, and that the general had died in Vienna that morning.

He also had to open all the drawers, wardrobes, desks, etc., in which large numbers of papers and photographs had been found. When they had examined them, the officers were for some reason struck with amazement ; they expressed such remarks as " How is it possible ? " " Who would have imagined it ? " Some of the papers, it appeared, were Russian, and there were a lot of plans. A good deal of money was found also.

The General must have been very rich ; his house was gorgeously furnished.

" Looking for the will, I should think they were," concluded Wagner. " At any rate the General did keep his documents safe. Some of the locks were very difficult to break. Oh, yes, I'll be at next Sunday's match. A thing like that doesn't happen every Sunday."

The captain of the team, no less amazed than the officers, rushed back to his office.

So that was the *real* story behind the official " Vienna Correspondence Bureau's " message which he had dealt with in the course of his sub-editorial work in the previous evening —a message which appeared in that morning's papers. It told, with regret, of the suicide of Colonel Albert Redl, chief of the Staff of the 8th Army Corps ". . . a very gifted officer who would have risen to the highest rank." He had gone to Vienna " on a professional mission " and " in a moment of

depression, brought on by weeks of insomnia, had shot himself."

Russian documents! Plans and photos! Suicide! A commission of officers had been specially sent from Vienna to search the Colonel's house. Why, the thing was as clear as daylight—*Redl was a spy*! The man whose genius was everywhere recognised, and who might soon have been in command of the Austrian army—had been a traitor!

The sub-editor, the captain of the football team Storm I., certainly had happened on a great story—but he could not use it in his own paper. Were the news to appear in the *Prager Tagblatt*, the police would swoop down and confiscate every copy, suspend the paper, and send to prison as many members of the staff as possible. So he consulted his editor, and this is what appeared in the *Prager Tagblatt* on the Tuesday morning:

> "We are asked by a person of high authority to contradict rumours which have been circulated, particularly in army circles, about the Chief of Staff of the Prague Army Corps, Colonel A. Redl, who, as already reported, committed suicide in Vienna on Sunday morning. The rumours are to the effect that the Colonel had been guilty of betraying military secrets to a foreign power, believed to be Russia. As a matter of fact, the commission of high officers who came to Prague to carry out a search in the dead colonel's house were investigating quite another matter."

That was all that could be safely printed in a Prague paper. But the public knew what it meant, for newspaper readers in Bohemia had long been forced by a stringent censorship to read not only between the lines but also "behind the paragraph." If they read "Colonel Redl is not a traitor," they knew that that meant "Colonel Redl *is* a traitor."

Thus pre-War Austria-Hungary learned the main fact of the tragedy. But on Wednesday the rest of Europe read a much more detailed story, for the captain of Storm I. was the Prague correspondent of a Berlin paper. For two or three days Europe was interested; the affair was a nine days' sensation. Then the story was forgotten.

The Great War had to come and go, the Austrian Empire had to fall, and an extraordinary military system had to crumble before, one by one, here and there, various documents were found. Only now can the full story be told.

Here it is:

Alfred Redl was undoubtedly one of the most brilliant officers of the Austrian army. He was a clever linguist, had a great personal knowledge of the chief European countries; military history was another of his strong points; he was industrious, energetic, efficient, successful. In 1900, when General Baron von Giesl was head of the Secret-Service of Austria-Hungary, he appointed Redl chief of the "Information Department" (espionage and counter-espionage). So well did he do his work that when Giesl was appointed to the Prague command—one of the most important in the Dual Monarchy—he insisted on having Redl as the chief of staff there. For five years (1900–05) Redl was Director of the Intelligence Department, and he made it the most efficient piece of the whole organisation of the Austro-Hungarian army. He caught some of Europe's clevest spies; he wrested many great secrets from several European powers; he never seemed to fail. Yet, for rather more than half the time he held that appointment Redl was acting as a spy for Old Imperial Russia.

The Information Department (the "Kurd Schafts Stelle," or, for short, the "K.S.") was an astounding place. If the "K.S." was in the least degree interested in any visitor, his photograph, face, and profile could be taken, his fingerprints registered, and his every word put on a gramophone plate—and without his knowledge. No matter where the visitor sat—in the hall, in a waiting-room, or an office, a couple of unseen cameras were focused on him.

Soon after he had been shown into an officer's room, a telephone there would ring. In the middle of the conversation the officer would point to a closed cigarette-case on the table and say, "Do have a cigarette." The visitor would take the case and help himself. The outside of the case was treated with minium, and retained (invisible until developed) the fingerprints of the person who handled it. The telephone talk was a "dummy conversation," of course, for the officer had called himself by pressing with his foot a knob under the table.

If the visitor did not smoke, then the officer would suddenly recollect that a file, lying at the visitor's end of the table, should have been taken to Room —— long ago. He would snatch it up, and, with "Excuse me for a couple of minutes," would run out of the room. Another file was then exposed; it was marked "Secret." Few visitors to the "K.S." were likely to be able to resist just a peep into a secret file!

The boards of this were also treated with minium. If the visitor, watched from the next room, resisted that temp-

tation, then another ruse would be tried, and another, until at last one was successful. And, during the interview, an instrument was transmitting every spoken word to a gramophone record in the next room.

So great was the efficiency of the "K.S." when Major Redl was promoted to the rank of Colonel and became General von Giesl's chief of staff, that his very name was an incentive to his successor, Captain Ronge, and to the whole "K.S." staff. "Remember Redl." "What would Redl think?" were indeed mottoes in the place, and the department maintained its high state of efficiency. The legacy which, in this respect, Redl left to the "K.S." was strangely enough his undoing—eight years later.

The new chief of "K.S." was always on the lookout for methods and plans whereby he could out-Redl Redl. In 1908 when the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria Hungary made the European situation uneasy, Captain Ronge and his chief had to be more than ever on the alert, and one of the things which Ronge did was to establish a secret postal censorship. Only three persons—the Chief, Ronge and the officer who was put at the head of the "Black Bureau," as the censorship department was called—knew the real reason for the step. The staff, sworn to secrecy, was told that it was mainly for the detection of customs swindles. Thus they paid special attention to letters coming from frontier places. It was by means of this censorship that, during the "annexation period," the Russian military attaché in Vienna, a colonel most popular in society, was found to be engaged in espionage. He could not be arrested, of course, but at a State ball one night the Emperor "cut" him in a pointed fashion. The attaché knew from that that the Austrians had found out, and within a week he had engineered his own recall. His successor was also discovered to be spying—yet another success for the "Black Bureau" and the "K.S." On the 2nd March, 1913, two letters were opened in the "Black Bureau." They were both addressed:

OPERA BALL 13,
POSTE RESTANTE,
GENERAL POST OFFICE,
VIENNA.

They came, according to the postmarks, from Eydtkuhnen in East Prussia, on the Russo-German frontier. One contained notes to the amount of 6,000 Austrian kronen (£240), and the other 8,000 kronen (£320). Neither contained any

covering letter ; it was, therefore, natural that they should arouse suspicion. If the money were owing to any one as the result of an honest business transaction, why had it not been sent in a more usual fashion? And Eydtkuhnen! That little Prussian frontier station known to the spies of all the world. Little wonder that the "K.S." was more than usually curious. It was decided to discover the identity of the person for whom the letters were intended. On one side of the General Post Office, in the Fleischmarkt, there is a small police station. A wire was fixed up between it and the Poste Restante counter, so that the clerk on duty had only to press a button which set a bell ringing in one of the rooms at the police station. He was instructed to do this the moment the letters were asked for, and to be very slow in handing them out. In the police station two detectives were to be ready day and night to rush out the instant the bell rang and arrest the person receiving the letters. On the following morning everything was in perfect order—only the bell did not ring. A week passed : silence. A month went by : the letters still lay there : April passed : May was running to a close. Strange! The letters, with £560 in them, had not been called for. But on Saturday afternoon, 24th May : "B-r-r-r . . . b-r-r-r . . . b-r-r-r."

The bell was ringing.

As bad luck would have it, both detectives were out of the room. Still, not many seconds later, they were dashing across to the post office.

"Oh, you have been long in coming," said the clerk. "The man has just gone—to the left."

The detectives rushed out to the street, to see a taxicab at the corner move off. There was no reason to doubt that it carried the receiver of the letters. And not another taxicab in sight ; pursuit was out of the question. The two men stood where they were for about twenty minutes, talking the matter over, and then a taxicab came slowly along the street. One of the detectives glanced at it, and started. It was the cab in which the man had driven off! They hailed it, and asked the driver where he had driven "their friend"—the man he had taken up at that corner about twenty minutes before.

"Oh, to the Café Kaiserhof."

"Well, drive us there too."

En route, the detective thoroughly examined the inside of the cab, and found the sheath of a pocket knife in there, made of bright grey cloth. That was all. In the Café Kaiserhof, almost empty, no one likely to be the wanted man could

be seen. Where had he gone? Doubled on his tracks in another taxicab? That was what the detectives concluded. The only place where he could get a cab was at a stand a little distance away. There the two men learned that a gentleman had taken a cab, about half an hour before, to drive to the Hotel Klomser.

"To the Hotel Klomser, then."

At that hotel the two detectives asked the porter if anybody had driven up in a taxi within the past hour or so. Yes, several; the person on No. 4, No. 11 and No. 21. Yes, and No. 1 came in as well. That was Colonel Redl, but he might have arrived on foot.

"Colonel Redl?" asked one of the detectives. "The great——"

"Of Prague," added the porter.

One of the detectives showed the porter the pocket-knife sheath.

"You may as well take it," he said, "and ask your guests, as you get the chance, if any of them has lost it."

The porter took the sheath, and just then a gentleman in fashionable civilian clothes came down the stairs and gave up the key of No. 1.

"Pardon me," said the porter to him, "but has the Herr Colonel by any chance lost the sheath of his pocket-knife?" And he held out the sheath to the Colonel.

"Oh, thank you. Yes, of course that's mine," said the Colonel carelessly, as he took the sheath.

"Where did I use——?"

He stopped and went deathly white.

He glanced quickly at the porter, but the man was hanging up the key.

Another man was standing near, apparently engrossed in a newspaper. For a moment the Colonel stood still. Did it flash on him that he was cornered—caught after ten years of treachery?

He pocketed the sheath, looked slowly round him again, and went to the door. The man with the newspaper rushed to the telephone box.

"Twelve-three-forty-eight," he said. (It was a number given quickly, because it was the secret number of the State Political Police.)

Meanwhile Colonel Redl was walking away from the hotel.

A few minutes later the chief officers of the "K.S." had, too, learned the news of all that had happened in that exciting hour—that some one had called for the two "Opera Ball 13"

letters and had tried to throw off a possible pursuit; how the pocket-knife sheath had been found, and how it had been established that it belonged to Colonel Redl! The three officers who knew whispered the name to each other in their blank astonishment.

Their teacher, their former chief, their model! Was he a spy—a traitor?

Captain Ronge, head of the "K.S.," rushed to the G.P.O. to make inquiries. At the Poste Restante counter persons who asked for letters had to fill in a little form. (Nature of packet. Address of packet. Say if possible where from.)

He was given the form which had been filled in by the person who had received the two "Opera Ball 13" letters, and he took it back to his office. From a shelf behind his chair he pulled down a slim, neatly bound volume, *Advice in Espionage Detection*. It was in manuscript, a forty-page document, by Colonel Redl, and was the last thing he had done as chief of "K.S." In it he had summed up, for the benefit of his successor, his experiences as a spy catcher! Ronge laid the form on one of the pages. Yes, there was no doubt about it. The writing on the form was Redl's.

Captain Ronge sat down and stared as he compared it with the neat handwriting of the manuscript.

Redl! Redl! . . . of all men.

Yet . . . there was the proof. He had received suspicious postal packets with large sums of money. But they might not really be for him. It was possible he was simply doing some one a little service in calling for the letters. It was hard to suspect Redl. Still—14,000 kronen!! And from the frontier station of all places. That drive from the G.P.O. to the Café Kaiserhof and back to the Hotel Klomser was suspicious. There was a knock at the door! Ronge jumped out of his reverie. "Come in!" The door opened and one of the detectives entered. "News?" "Yes—in fragments," answered the man, with a grim smile, as he took a number of small, torn pieces of paper from his pocket-book.

For half an hour Ronge and the detective worked at putting the pieces together. Then, the work done, they looked in silence at each other. That settled it. Colonel Alfred Redl, Chief of Staff of the 8th Corps, was a spy and a traitor.

What were Colonel Redl's thoughts as he stood just a few seconds at the door of the Hotel Klomser? Things must have gone black before his eyes. His hands went to one of the pockets of his waistcoat. Yes, his pocket-knife was there

—without the sheath. But how on earth had the porter got hold of the thing?

Ah, yes, he had used the knife when he was in the taxicab to get the money out of the envelopes. And after? Curious. Annoying. Dangerous. He had been very careless. Then he must have realised that he was cornered—surrounded. He turned to the right and walked some way down the Hersengasse. At the corner of Strauchgasse, where the famous Café Central is, he looked round furtively. Nobody appeared to be following him. Stay; there was that person who had been reading the newspaper by the porter's desk; he was coming in the same direction with another man. They had seen him.

It was hardly reasonable to suppose that the Colonel was trying to escape. He had to solve a question. Was he being followed? He guessed that he was, therefore he had been betrayed, or had betrayed himself. In that case his experience at the hotel showed that his identity was known to his pursuers. If he could only throw the men off the trail for a while. He had to think things out, to write a few letters, to dine with Pollock, to get back to Prague if possible, and then to —shoot himself! He could not make a dash for it, so he drew from his pockets some papers. He did not look at them to see what they were; it did not really matter now. He tore them into pieces and threw them down. The men would certainly stop to pick them up. They did not. Both continued the pursuit. At the Konkordia Platz, a few taxicabs were standing. It was no use taking one, for the pursuers would do the same. He continued walking on. But as he took a glance backwards, he saw one of the detectives jump into a taxi and drive off. All the afternoon the "shadower" hung relentlessly on, no matter where Redl went. The man was a dozen yards away as the colonel turned into his hotel.

Where had the other detective gone? Needless to state he had gone to pick up the scraps of paper thrown away by the Colonel, and, as already mentioned, taken by him to Captain Ronge, head of the "K.S." When the fragments were pieced together, it was seen that the papers which Colonel Redl had torn up were:

A receipt for the despatch of money to an officer of the Uhlans, a Russian Secret Service officer.

Three receipts for registered letters to Brussels, Warsaw and Lausanne. (All the three addresses were well known to the "K.S.")

Colonel Redl had received letters containing £560 from the Russian frontier.

The address on one of the registered letter receipts was known as that of the joint office in Brussels of the Russian and French Secret Services.

The Lausanne address was that of one of the foreign headquarters of the Italian Secret Service.

The address in Warsaw was one of the principal intelligence bureaux of the Russian Secret Service.

With this information in his possession, Captain Ronge went to report to his chief.

Just about that time Colonel Redl reached the Hotel Klomser, to be greeted in the vestibule by Dr. Victor Pollock, one of the chief legal authorities in Austria, and the Colonel's colleague and collaborator in court proceedings in connection with espionage cases. They were great friends, and the greeting was cordial.

"We dine at the Riedhof," said Dr. Pollock gaily, and the Colonel excused himself while he went to change into evening clothes.

The shadowing detective overheard what had been said; he reported the same to headquarters and was given his instructions. At the Riedhof he saw the manager, explained his object, and then, later, disguised as a waiter and acting the part perfectly, he received the two guests and served them an excellent dinner in a private room. Pollock was in a jovial mood, and Redl, at first, tried to cast the haunting fears from his mind. His last dinner! That thought must have been with him. . . . He had played for ten years and now he had lost. He must face the grim music. Only, he he would rather face it in Prague. Pollock might help him in that matter. Then Redl began to tell his friend of mental troubles, of moral lapses, of various misdemeanours. He was doing things while he was not really responsible for his actions; he had most probably done many things of late of which he was not aware.

Could Pollock not help him? To get back to Prague as quickly and as quietly as possible was the main thing. (The "waiter" heard nothing of this.) Of course, Pollock was ready to do anything for him. It was clear his friend was suffering from a serious mental disturbance—a really distressing business. He would ring up a friend and see what could be done. His friend happened to be Herr Gayer, the chief of police! When the "waiter" heard a familiar number spoken into the telephone, he was more puzzled than ever. Was the great lawyer working as a detective in the case?

At 11.30 Colonel Redl, having taken leave of Dr. Pollock,

entered the Hotel Klomser, took his key and went slowly to room No. 1. At midnight there was a knock at the door. "Come in!"

The door opened and four officers in full uniform entered. Redl was sitting at a table writing. He rose and bowed.

"I know why you come," he said, in slow, quiet tones. "I have spoiled my life, and I am writing letters of farewell. I hope you will give me an opportunity to depart this life."

"Have you any accomplices?"

"No, none."

"The extent and duration of your activities——?"

"All proofs will be found at my house in Prague."

"Have you a revolver, Colonel?"

"May I ask you to get one for me?"

None of the officers carried a revolver, but the colonel was told that one would be brought him. The four officers whispered among themselves for a few seconds, and then, bowing, they withdrew. A quarter of an hour later one of them returned and handed a loaded revolver to the colonel.

"Thank you. Good-night."

"Good-night."

Leaving one of their number to keep within sight of the hotel, the three others went to the Café Central. They ordered coffee and sat there without talking. Every hour the man near the hotel was relieved. And so the night passed—till 5 a.m. Then one of the detectives who had followed Redl was called to the Café Central. He was given an envelope addressed to Colonel Redl, and instructed to take it to the hotel and inform the porter that it was imperative that he (the detective) should deliver it personally to the colonel. The detective was warned of what he might find. In case he found the colonel dead, he was to return without raising an alarm. The detective went to the Klomser. He knocked at the door of room No. 1 and received no answer. He turned the handle and the door opened. The light was full on. Colonel Redl lay on the floor in the middle of the room. He must have stood in front of the large mirror and fired a bullet into his brain. The blood had oozed out on to the carpet. The detective withdrew, closed the door and slipped past the sleeping porter. Five minutes later the porter was aroused by the ringing of the telephone bell.

"Hotel Klomser?"

"Yes."

"Please request Colonel Redl to come to the 'phone."

"Who is there?"

"Never mind. Do as I ask."

So the porter found the body just thirteen hours after the letter addressed to "Opera Ball 13" had been called for at the G.P.O.

The discovery was immediately reported to the police, and a high police official—it was Herr Gayer himself—and a doctor were soon at the hotel. They investigated matters. Redl had been dead for some time. Near his right hand was the revolver. On the table were two letters—one to his brother, and the other to General Baron von Giesl, Commander of the 8th Corps, and a half sheet of notepaper on which was written in a firm hand:

> "Levity and passion have destroyed me. Pray for me. I pay with my life for my sins."—ALFRED.
>
> "1.15 a.m.—I will die now. Please do not permit a post-mortem examination. Pray for me."

The colonel's servant, Josef Sladek, a faithful Czech, was beside himself with grief. He seized the chief of police by the arm.

"No," he cried, "it is not suicide. It is murder. The revolver does not belong to my master. Four men paid a mysterious visit to him at midnight. Some one came half an hour ago. It is murder."

Herr Gayer took the man into a corner and whispered a few words into his ear. That little matter was settled quickly. What was whispered no one ever knew, but scores of newspaper men on the following day could not worm a word out of Josef.

The body was removed a few hours afterwards, and two days later Colonel Redl was buried—one witness was present—in the Central Cemetery, Vienna, in grave 38, row 29, group 79.

Now the task of the authorities was to discover what Redl had betrayed—and the discoveries were to be truly sensational. One of his betrayals was to cost Austria-Hungary hundreds of thousands of men on the hills of Northern Serbia before many months were over.

Within a quarter of an hour of the discovery of Redl's body, General Conrad von Hoetzendorff had been informed, and before an hour was over a special train was carrying a commission, consisting of a colonel and a major, to Prague, to conduct an investigation at the dead officer's house.

Redl's house was furnished with extreme luxury, and it was known that, three years previously, he had bought a large estate. Receipts showed, too, that he had, in five years,

bought no fewer than four of the most expensive motor-cars. In Vienna he owned a large house. It was known that he had "private means," but receipts proved that he had lived like an extravagant millionaire. In his wine cellar were 160 dozen of the finest French champagnes. Then, from various documents, it was learned that in less than a year, he had received from Russia about 60,000 kronen (about £2,500) for his services as a spy. That amount was ten times the salary of a colonel, but it was evident that the documents discovered did not give nearly the full amount. It must have been five or six times that figure, for the Russian Secret Service was always particularly liberal. He had betrayed odds and ends to Italy; some material had gone to France, but his relations with these countries were indirect. However, it was clear that he had acted for ten years as Russia's chief foreign spy. He had made a speciality of denouncing to the Russian authorities persons acting as spies in Russia.

He had begun this work in 1902.

What had he betrayed?

From the great mass of letters, copied documents, codes, photographs, plans, secret army orders, mobilisation schemes, reports on the condition of railways and roads, precise statements regarding the equipment of the army, etc., it was quickly evident that there was very little he had not betrayed. And to Russia, the great potential enemy! It was established, too, that the blood of many Austrian and Hungarian Secret Service agents abroad was on his hands. Some had been Redl's friends and colleagues at the "K.S." Cold-bloodedly he had sacrificed them to make his position as a spy in Russian service more secure. Surely a more dastardly form of crime it would be difficult to imagine! His position as chief of the espionage and counter-espionage department of the Secret Service, which he held from 1900 to 1905, made it quite easy for him to furnish the information.

Thus the preliminary and hurried investigation had revealed a tale of unparalleled treachery. It showed that the whole military position of Austria had been "given away."

"Plan 3" had flashed through the mind of the commander-in-chief of the army, as soon as he heard of Redl's treachery. "Plan 3" was the complete scheme for the military action against Serbia, should Austria-Hungary go to war with that country. Every detail, down to the last man and gun, was fixed: how the necessary forces would be moved, where some were stationed, and where others would be mobilised; the points at which Serbia would be attacked,

etc., were fully outlined in descriptions, plans, statistics, maps. "Plan 3" was the masterpiece of the Austro-Hungarian War Military Staff.

It is said that Moltke had to be aroused from sleep to hear the news of the declaration of war in 1870 against the French. "Take down File No. —— from Shelf No. —— and act on the instructions you find in it," he said. And he turned over and went to sleep again.

It was Conrad von Hoetzendorff's ambition to be another Moltke. When the war with Serbia, which he regarded as inevitable, came, he had merely to say "Plan 3" and a staff lieutenant could set the whole plan of campaign in motion. And Redl had sold "Plan 3" to the Russians! That was to say, the Serbians knew all about it!

Von Hoetzendorff knew he would have to re-model the whole vast and complicated scheme.

That was a plan of terrific difficulty, because into "Plan 3" almost every ounce of the military wisdom of the Dual Monarchy had been put. The plan might be altered, but its main features would have to remain very much the same. The Serbian General Staff, with that brilliant soldier Marshal Putnik at its head, had had an insight into the mind of the Austro-Hungarian General Staff. For months, Putnik had been pondering over "Plan 3." He had indeed known it by heart long ago. He could easily see where the changes would occur. What good use the Serbian Commander made of his knowledge was to be seen in the early stages of the Great War. To the surprise of the whole world, Putnik and his wonderful little Serbian Army drove back, not only one Austro-Hungarian invasion—*but three.*

Thrice the Austro-Hungarian Army tried variants of "Plan 3" and thrice Putnik checkmated it, and inflicted tremendous losses on the invading forces.

One of the most remarkable of the discoveries made in the examination of Redl's papers was his betrayal of a Russian colonel. The Archduke Francis Ferdinand had been on a visit to St. Petersburg, and had been so well received at the Russian Court and by the Russian statesmen that he had requested the Austro-Hungarian military attaché, who accompanied His Royal Highness to Warsaw on the return journey, to reduce espionage in Russia to the greatest possible extent, so as not to annoy the Russians. The attaché left the train at Warsaw and stayed in that city for two days. While he was there he received a visit from a Russian colonel, who offered him the whole plans for a Russian military attack on Germany and Austria-Hungary. In spite of the heir-apparent's

instructions, the attaché could scarcely refuse such a "good thing," and he came to terms with the Russian.

When Redl heard of the deal he immediately took action. The plans, of course, came first to him, as he was head of the espionage and counter-espionage department of the Secret Service. He substituted for them a set of "spoof" plans so as to make it obvious, in the first place, that the attaché in St. Petersburg had been badly "sold." He was recalled. Redl returned the real plans (which no one but himself and the military attaché at St. Petersburg had seen) to the Russian authorities, and provided them with the name of the treacherous colonel who had sold them. The Russian colonel committed suicide on hearing of his betrayal. For this, Redl received £4,000.

In this case Redl rendered good service to the Russians. Not only did he keep the Russian plans a secret from the Germans and the Austrians, but he prevented both from knowing anything about a considerable number of Russian Army corps. Years afterwards a well-known Austro-Hungarian statesman declared, "If the General Staff of the Dual Monarchy had known of the existence of these army corps, our generals would have seen the extreme danger of a quarrel with Russia and would have been able to prevent our courtiers from driving us into a war in 1914. Hence our war fever and our defeat. That villain, Redl, denounced every Austro-Hungarian spy in Russia and delivered our secrets to the Russians."

The biggest espionage case in which Colonel Redl was involved was the sensational one known as the Hekailo-Wienckowski-Acht affair, the full and tragic story of which is now told for the first time. Documents found in Redl's house showed how, at the very beginning of his career as a spy and traitor, he was nearly betrayed. Only his coolness and the great skill with which he played his double rôle of spy and spy prosecutor pulled him out of an exceedingly difficult and perilous position. Even the advocate engaged for the prosecution came within an ace of suspecting him. The whole story is one of inhuman callousness. In 1903, when Redl had just begun his activities on behalf of Russia, a young man named Hekailo, who held the position of a clerk in the army administration at Lemberg, was arrested on a charge of misappropriating funds. An inquiry resulted in his being released, and he immediately fled the country. Two months later, Colonel (then Major) Redl called on Dr. Haberditz, an eminent Vienna advocate generally engaged for military cases. Dr. Haberditz had conducted the

inquiry into the Hekailo case, and was interested and astonished to hear Redl allege that the man was guilty of espionage on behalf of Russia, and that he had, most likely, betrayed the plans for the co-operation of Germany and Austria-Hungary in marching against Russia via the Thorn region. Redl declared that he had discovered Hekailo's whereabouts from an intercepted letter which Hekailo had sent to a friend in Lemberg, saying that he had settled down in Curytiba, in Southern Brazil, under the name of Karl Weber.

As a result, Hekailo's extradition was demanded on the grounds that he had committed extensive thefts. (He could not be extradited, of course, for being a spy.) Hekailo was put on trial at Vienna. Redl produced most damaging proofs against him—photographs, letters, drawings and various documents sent to the address of a governess in the family of one of the officers of the Russian General Staff in Warsaw. Among the documents was proof that the above mentioned plan had been betrayed. Redl declared that it had cost about 30,000 kronen (ore £1,200) to obtain possession of these proofs.

Both Haberditz and Redl tried countless ways to make Hekailo confess, but in vain. At last, in reply to a question put to him by Redl, he said :

" Major, how could I obtain these plans ? Only some one at General Staff Headquarters in Vienna could obtain them and sell them to the Russians."

Little did Hekailo know how near he had come to the truth.

Under severe pressure Hekailo mentioned the name of one Major Ritter von Wienckowski, stationed at Stanislau. Next day Redl and Haberditz went to Stanislau and had Major von Wienckowski arrested. Half a ton of documents were seized, and the identity of another person in the case established—Captain Acht, personal adjutant to the commander of Lemberg ! When all three men were in the dock and the case had become a highly sensational one—a special verbatim report was prepared for the Emperor—Redl's attitude suddenly changed, and, as far as Wienckowski and Acht were concerned, he was almost their defender instead of the expert witness against them. As a result, Redl and Haberditz became less friendly, and eventually their relations were so strained that the advocate went to Redl's superior, expressed his suspicions, and demanded that some one else be employed in the case instead of Redl. But the advocate's suspicions were ridiculed. Then, two weeks after, Redl changed his attitude, and again became the merciless person he was before. The three defendants, in the end,

were sentenced, one to eight years and two to twelve years in prison.

Now, why did Redl change his attitude twice in the case? The papers found in his house told the reason why, and a grim story it is. It was Redl who sold the plans in question to the Russians. In addition to his " fee " he demanded that the Russians should make it possible for him to have a big espionage case in Vienna. The reasons for such a wish are obvious. Now, as Hekailo had fled to Brazil, he was no longer of any use to the Russian Secret Service, so the Russians put Redl on the man's track and provided the necessary material to convict him of treason. (The 30,000 kronen which Redl said the proofs cost him, really went into his own pocket.) From the Russian point of view, however, the case became serious and important as soon as it involved Wienchowski and Acht, two of the best spies in the Russian service in all the frontier region. The Russian military attaché in Vienna, therefore, paid Redl a visit and told him that he must secure the acquittal of the two officers. Otherwise . . .

Redl knew he could look for no mercy from his Russian employers so, as already mentioned, he tried to influence the court in favour of Wienchowski and Acht. He saw that it was impossible to do anything, however, and he had to come to terms with the Russians. He managed to do so, and the Russians agreed to sacrifice the two officers. On what terms?

In court when the case was nearing its end, Redl had occasion to refer to a certain incriminating document which had been secured, he said, at great cost. A Russian major (on the General Staff at Warsaw) had sent it to him.

The major was a man who, Redl added, had done a great deal of good work for Austria. The theft, however, being traced to the Major, he had been tried by court-martial, found guilty and hanged.

What really happened was that Redl, to persuade the Russians to agree to the condemnation of Weinckowski and Acht, had undertaken to betray a spy to the Warsaw military authorities and to provide the evidence of his guilt. The major was the person whom Redl betrayed (one of his own men, who in truth had done much good work against the Russians for Austria), and sent to his death, in accordance with this villainous agreement.

THE MEN WHO HEARD THE U-BOATS TALK

By

HECTOR C. BYWATER AND H. C. FERRABY

SOME of the hardest work done by Intelligence men during the war had no spice of personal danger in it, but for all that it was full of thrills.

Performed in the Base Intelligence Offices at various points round the coast, it was the corner stone of the whole system by which we countered the German submarine menace. The effectual use of the 5,000 patrol vessels and convoy craft which were engaged in the actual work of hunting the U-boats depended very largely on the Intelligence men. It was the hard thinking done in the Base Intelligence Office which made possible the proper planning of the dispositions of these anti-submarine craft.

It is, of course, a commonplace that the submarine's strongest asset is the secrecy with which it can move from place to place. The task of the Base Intelligence Office was to get behind that veil of secrecy; to determine, to within a mile or two, the whereabouts of every German submarine on any given day. And that knowledge referred, not only to the fifty or sixty boats actually at sea, either in Northern waters, in the Channel, in the Atlantic or in the Mediterranean, but also to the others which had just gone back to port, those which were undergoing repairs, and those which were about to put to sea again.

At first sight this may seem an impossible task. How, it may be asked, could our Intelligence people possibly know what was happening in the enemy dockyards of Wilhelmshaven and Kiel and Danzig during war time? It was difficult enough to obtain any definite information about submarines during peace-time.

The task was not impossible, however. Indeed, by 1918 it had become almost as simple as a mathematical problem of the less abstruse order. In September of that year our Intelligence people had a forecast of the dates on which every German submarine then in dockyard would reappear at sea. In every single instance the forecast was correct to within twenty-four hours.

Intelligence work of this kind is largely a matter of common sense, used by a mind trained to weigh the value and the meaning of the smallest clue. It depends upon accurate deduction. If one can imagine Sherlock Holmes solving a mystery without moving from his rooms in Baker Street, working solely by the accurate piecing together of little items of news given to him by this person or that, one has a rough idea of the way the Base Intelligence Office grappled with the difficulty of keeping track of the U-boats.

The sources of information were many and varied. The most valuable of all were the wireless directional stations round our coasts. Directional wireless has, of course, made remarkable strides since those days, but even then we had developed it sufficiently to gather accurate news day by day from the enemy's own transmitting sets.

Reduced to its simplest terms, the method was this. A U-boat somewhere off the North of Ireland called up a consort with whom she had a rendezvous. One of our wireless directional stations on the Scottish coast would hear her call. We will label that station X.

Another station on the north-east Irish coast would hear the call. Label that station Y.

And yet another station on the north-west Irish coast would pick up the call. Label that station Z.

Each of those stations would report to a central Base Intelligence Office not only what it heard, but also the direction from which the sounds were coming. The power of the sounds would increase or decrease as a part of the receiving machine was turned round by the operator. The point at which the signal strength was most marked gave the bearing or direction of the source.

At the Base Intelligence Office those reports would be worked out on a large scale chart. A line drawn from X, a line drawn from Y, and a line drawn from Z in the direction that each station had reported, ought to meet somewhere, and somewhere within a radius of about two miles or less round the point where the three lines meet is the U-boat.

That was the simplest and easiest sort of problem for the Intelligence officer. With only one U-boat calling there was not much chance of confusion. When several calls were reported at the same time, however, the problem became more difficult. Three or four calls might be notified at about the same time, some from our original three stations X, Y, and Z, some from other stations. Then arose the possibility of all sorts of confusion. The wrong line might be drawn. A report from Station X might be made to tally with a report

from a station in the south of Ireland, and the point where the two lines met would be somewhere 100 miles out in the Atlantic—and there would be no U-boat there at all.

It was, therefore, necessary to find a means of isolating the calls, to discover which U-boat was talking, and which boat each station was reporting.

The British Intelligence Service owed a deep debt of gratitude to the Germans for their loyal adherence to method. The Germans had a plan, and they kept to it. No chopping or changing for them. There were no sudden or frequent alterations of system.

The U-boats always began their conversation by sending out their own secret code numbers. It was an invariable rule, and we thus came to know that the first letters of a call gave the code numeral of the submarine that was talking. This saved us a great deal of trouble.

When the Intelligence Officer at the Base received simultaneously six reports from different stations, he looked at once for the first letters of each message. Three of the messages would begin with (let us say) MON. Three would begin with LRT. He plotted them on his chart.

And at once he had—again within a circle of two miles radius—knowledge of the whereabouts of those two U-boats.

This sort of information, of course, was not intended merely for the entertainment of the shore staff, nor for the compilation of pretty dossiers to be filed in the Base Office.

It was passed at once to the senior naval officers concerned, for them to take the necessary steps to direct the patrols and the convoys that were in the path of the enemy.

Meantime the Base Intelligence Officer would turn to the large-scale chart on the wall of his office and stick a pin with a coloured flag in the place where the U-boat was assumed to be.

Those flags represented not only the U-boats of which his own directional wireless stations (and other sources) had given him news ; the chart covered a wide sweep of the seas, and showed the sections which were the immediate concern of neighbouring B.I.O.'s, as well as that under the control of his own base. They used the same flags as he did. It was not unlike the plan of working a railway, where one signal-box passes a train to the next. The U-boats were invisibly shadowed the whole time they were at sea, and signalled from one section to the next.

Sometimes the chart would simply bristle with pins. At other times there would be very few pins. This was because the intensity of the U-boat campaign was subject to violent

fluctuations. The Germans were not always able to keep up the pressure.

The busiest month of all was June, 1917. During that month the first of the big U-cruisers put to sea. There were twenty-seven boats of all types working in the North Sea and the Atlantic, thirteen in the Channel, fifteen in the Mediterranean, three in the Baltic, and two in the Black Sea. Yet in November of the same year the number of boats at sea had shrunk to thirty, while some thirty-five were located at various dockyards undergoing overhaul.

Anti-submarine intelligence work was not confined to such material facts as the position of the enemy. It was also very important to know the personal characteristics of the men in command. No two submarine commanders possessed the same skill, or the same courage, or pursued the same tactics. And our methods of dealing with them varied according to their characteristics. One man, known to be a dangerous and skilful opponent, would be tackled and trailed from the moment he was located. Another man, known to be a braggart, who fired torpedoes haphazard and returned home claiming to have sunk tens of thousands of tons of shipping—when his total bag was really one small sailing-ship, holed but not sunk—could be safely left alone if he was not near any of our shipping lanes. It is a rather remarkable fact, which few except those who were closely engaged in anti-submarine work have ever realised, that only two out of the twenty best German submarine officers were killed during the war, and both lost their lives, not in action, but by their submarines hitting mines and blowing up.

Lieut.-Commander Arnauld de la Perière, the most successful of all the U-boat captains, sank 400,000 tons of shipping, and Lieut.-Commander Walther Forstmann was only 20,000 tons behind him. Whenever we picked up the trail of any submarine " ace," the patrols and the Q-ships were specially warned.

These differences between the characteristics of the U-boat commanders were considered to be so important that each was represented on the wall chart by a different flag.

Thus, to go back to our imaginary pair, whose positions we noted from directional wireless reports a few pages back, MON would perhaps have a white flag with one black star on it, while LRT would be a black flag with a white line running across it diagonally. Everybody in the Base Intelligence Office who had access to the anti-submarine room was thus presented with a clear picture of the position at sea from hour to hour. When further reports of the movements of

those two submarines came in, an extra flag of each kind would be put on the chart to mark the new positions, and so we were able to trace the course which the U-boat commander was steering and to obtain some idea of his objective —whether he was making for the Irish Sea to attack the Liverpool traffic, or whether he was on his way to the Atlantic and the Queenstown area.

In the same way, at Queenstown, they would be able to judge whether he was prowling in the chops of the Channel, or whether he was aiming to work farther south in the Bay of Biscay. In the latter event the Allied bases on the Biscayan coast would be able to pick him up and shadow him until he started on his way home again, when he would again be watched through the Queenstown area, and so up the Irish coast into the Scottish region, and round by the extreme north.

It is important here to point out that, though we kept this close watch on the movements of the submarine, our knowledge of its position was always approximate. Sometimes, of course, it was possible to get patrol ships to the spot very quickly and to harry the submarine, but the Atlantic is a very wide ocean, and more often than not the submarine's position was miles and miles away from our nearest ships.

Let us recall a typical scene in the Base Intelligence Office at an important centre.

It was Sunday morning. Things were quiet. The wall chart had all the midnight positions of the U-boats marked up. It had nearly all their 8 a.m. positions, too. There was one that was missing, however. Nothing had been heard of him since midnight.

His various flags on the chart showed him to be steering southwards, and he had just reached the point where it was important for us to know whether he was going on south to the Bay of Biscay and the Spanish coast, or whether he would turn eastwards and worry us off the mouth of the Channel. There were patrolling destroyers on his line of route. They might sight him, if they were lucky, but it was more likely that the first news we should get of him would be an attack on some merchant ship, perhaps within twenty miles of where we were sitting ashore.

Some U-boat commanders were full of guile, and it was no uncommon occurrence for us to lose touch with them for two or three days on end. One of these " dog-foxes," whose pin had been stationary on the wall chart for some time, had not been using his wireless. He might be in trouble, or he might be preparing trouble. Watching U-boats, as the reader

will have gathered by this time, involved much guessing and a great deal of patient waiting.

It was very quiet in the office. A clerk was silently docketing information at a little desk in the corner. The Base Intelligence Officer, leaning back in his swing chair, was smoking his pipe, waiting with that indomitable patience that Intelligence men learn to cultivate. The visitor stood before the wall chart, studying the whole position—which was new to him, since he had only arrived the previous night—weighing up the various factors, and mentally digesting the information that had been given to him.

The hands of the clock pointed to eleven when the green baize door swung quickly inwards, and a messenger came in.

He handed an official form to the B.I.O.

The ticking of the clock was the only sound for several seconds, while the officer read the message slowly through.

"Forty-seven twenty. Ten-ten," he said at last.

The visitor glanced round at the first word, and then turned back again to the chart.

"He's off to Spain, then?" he suggested, having fixed the latitude and longitude which the figures indicated.

The B.I.O. frowned, doubtfully.

"May be," he grunted. "At the present moment he's pumping shell into a Q-ship, and the poor devils in her are having a pretty thin time of it."

There was a moment of tense drama! The two men sitting in safety in a cosy office on a peaceful Sabbath morning—the distant church bells had hardly ceased pealing—were discussing the martyrdom of some forty or fifty brave fellows who had challenged death in order to deal out death by stratagem. They were hundreds of miles away from that office, but the office knew all about them—and in the corner of the war with which the office was concerned even the death of those men would have been but a mere incident.

The business of the office was to acquire knowledge of the assailant. It was for others to send to the Q-ship's succour.

The B.I.O. walked over to the wall chart and stood beside the visitor, deep in thought.

"It must be him," he said, half to himself, gazing at the little rows of flags pinned one behind the other. "None of the others could have reached that position."

He stretched out his hand and selected a flag from a tray. It was black, with a white skull in the centre. He stuck it in the chart at 47° 20' North latitude 10° 10' West longitude, and put the telegram on a spike on his desk.

It was all he could do for the moment. There would be

The Q-ship had thrown off her disguise, after twenty minutes of inferno, when the U-boat was lying about 400 yards away from her on the surface.

more news later—perhaps. He returned to his task of waiting.

In a quarter of an hour another message came in.

The Q-ship had thrown off her disguise, after twenty minutes of inferno, when the U-boat was lying about 400 yards away from her on the surface. The Q-ship's gunners had loosed off half a dozen rounds from each gun before the submarine went under water. The captain of the mystery ship considered she was sunk.

The B.I.O. read the message over, aloud.

" Optimist ! " was his comment. " No word of survivors or of wreckage. Still, it may have scared them a bit. We'll log it as ' possibly slightly damaged.' I wish they had sent her number."

The comment was typical.

Facts were the vital food of the Intelligence Officer. He did not want guesses or suppositions. He spent half his time rejecting theories because there were no facts to support them.

And that desire to know the U-boat's number had a two-fold origin. In the first place, it would have settled the correctness or otherwise of the previous night's decoding of the secret letters with which the wireless talk had started. In the second place, it would have enabled the Base to be sure which of the enemy submarines was in that area. As matters stood, there was just a possibility that the attack had been delivered by a U-boat on its way home from the south—a newcomer, that is to say, in the area, who would have to be tracked all the time he was moving through our particular stretch of waters.

The first of these reasons was infinitely the more important from the Intelligence Officer's point of view. On the accuracy with which he decoded the secret call sign depended the accuracy of all his other information.

How was that decoding done ?

There were dozens of different ways, of course, some of them still too confidential to be divulged even after this lapse of time. But a few of the more simple methods may be explained.

As is described above, our wireless directional stations would pick up the actual lettering of the message, and we knew, after long experience, that the first three or four letters gave the code number.

Let us, for the sake of simplicity, continue to use the two instances already quoted : one U-boat's call was MON, the other's was LRT.

With the help of the directional wireless bearings we had

found the position of those two vessels on the chart. But our Base Office was a long way away from those positions. We wanted some one nearer the danger zone to discover certain facts for us. Who was available? Only time would tell us. We must wait for data as to the activity of each of the submarines.

MON at dawn sighted a small tramp steamer whose crew took to their boats. The U-boat came alongside to find out what the ship was, and perhaps to take the captain prisoner.

The keen-eyed mate spotted on the conning-tower, beneath the fresh layer of light-grey paint, the outline of letters and a number that looked like *U 99*, let us say. He bore it in mind, and when, some hours later, the drifting boats were picked up, he reported the fact to the commanding officer of the rescuing destroyer or patrol boat.

So the news would be passed on that the S.S. *War Baby* (to take an imaginary name) had been sunk in such and such a latitude, such and such a longitude, by a U-boat, supposed to be *U 99*.

In due course that news reached the Base Intelligence Officer.

The position given agreed with the wireless directional placing of MON.

Therefore, until disproved, MON = *U 99*.

Five days later MON, now operating off the south coast of Ireland, sinks another steamer, and one of her crew, taunting the drifting survivors, shouts, " Britain shall tremble at the name of *U 99* ! "

The survivors are rescued and report the boastful threat.

And so, scrap by scrap, evidence piles up and proves our equation for us.

It must not be imagined that it was always as simple as in this particular case. For one thing, there might be no survivors. Once, when news was very urgently required for the purpose of establishing the identity of two submarines, one of them launched an attack. Five men got away from the sinking ship on a raft. Several days later two of them, alive but unconscious, were picked up by a British submarine which happened, quite by chance, to sight the raft. Neither of the men was in a condition to give any information for a long time, and by then the tangle had been unravelled by other means.

Let us take the case of the identification of U-boat LRT. This case is a little different from that of MON.

Her commander is a " dog-fox " who never shows himself.

He does his work with the torpedo. We only know that LRT is a code number that we would like to decode.

Then, suddenly, one day, we get a message from an Intelligence agent in a neutral port. He has learned that a small sailing-ship is putting out at night, and that local German emissaries have persuaded the skipper to take a few fresh provisions and other stores to a certain rendezvous, for delivery to the captain of *U* 100.

We go to the chart and scan the seas around that neutral port.

What U-boats are known to be working in that area? There is ADF about 150 miles away, but we know beyond all doubt that his number is *UB 80.*

Two hundred miles away is our last recorded position for LRT. He has been absent from his base more than a fortnight. Fresh provisions would be very welcome.

We begin to suspect that LRT = *U* 100.

That was how the work went on all through the war—slow, patient, plodding; pulling perhaps fifty wires in five different countries to extract one definite fact.

It will be realised that this was not "spying" in the melodramatic sense at all. Indeed, only a man with a real imaginative sense (what the American business man calls a "visualiser") would have seen the drama in the work. It was sheer intelligence, the using of one's wits to deduce the right conclusion from a given set of facts, with, perhaps, one vital clue missing. Those vital clues, too, had the oddest way of turning up from the most unexpected sources. Few people realised the need for a rigid censorship of the Press. Intelligence men did. They found so often one little ray of light in an obscure paragraph in some provincial German paper, one tiny ultimate fact which linked up all the other information and completed a perfect jigsaw puzzle.

Sometimes that happened even with the tracking of submarines in the Atlantic, incredible as such a thing may seem to those who have never had to build up a case on scanty information.

There came a time when we had the secret code call of every German submarine deciphered and logged. They were all set out neatly in order, beginning at *U* 5—we never found any trace of the four earliest boats putting to sea during the war—and going right down through the *UB* and *UC* types to the last completed vessel in each class.

Not one of them could send a wireless message without letting us know exactly who was talking and whereabouts he lay.

"Ah!" exclaims the intelligent reader at this point; "that is all very well: but codes are not like the laws of the Medes and Persians. They can be changed."

In the Intelligence Department we said the same thing, at first. We knew that the British Navy had a challenge and reply code for each day, and that it was altered frequently. Surely the Germans did likewise.

We were on the alert for changes. Because MON stood for *U 99* on her first trip out, we did not, six weeks later, take it for granted that MON still equalled *U 99*. We looked for fresh evidence.

And, to our astonishment, we learned gradually that the secret U-boat call-signs did not alter. They remained the same month after month. Apparently the highly-organised German system was such that it would not bear change. We could vary our wireless code calls from day to day if we wanted to, without any disorganisation. The Germans, for some reason, were unable, or unwilling, to make any variation in theirs.

Then, after many months, and almost in the last phase of the war, we were suddenly confronted by a conflict of evidence about MON. He was out in the Atlantic, and had been sighted at close quarters on the surface by a destroyer. A rift in the clouds flooded the scene with moonlight, and on the conning-tower there showed up the number—*UB 17*.

At the same time other calls that we had not had before began to come in from the wireless directional stations.

The Germans had changed their code system at last.

All our lists of U-boat numbers were promptly scrapped. We forgot all that we had done and started afresh. Those were pretty strenuous days in the Base Intelligence offices and in the I.D. at Whitehall. It was a race against time to get out a new list that should be complete, with not a single number missing, and not one doubtful.

The methods were the same as before, perfected by practice.

Three weeks after we had detected the change, the whole of the work was done. Every new call was decoded and fixed to its proper submarine!

INTRIGUE AT MONTE CARLO

By

DR. A. K. GRAVES

BACK in Berlin from a mission to Vienna, my dispatches delivered, once more comfortably ensconced in my quarters, on the Mittelstrasse, I was looking forward to an evening at the Pavilion Mascotte. I was just getting into my dinner coat when my man bowed an orderly through the door and at once all my plans took swift flight out of the window. The orderly brought a command for my immediate attendance at the Wilhelmstrasse. Now, the gentlemen of the Wilhelmstrasse are never kept waiting and do not accept excuses. Within twenty minutes I was shown into the chambers of Count von Wedel ; in thirty minutes I was out again, having complete orders. They know what they want at the Wilhelmstrasse and they generally get it.

As I hurried back to my rooms I went over what von Wedel had said :

" You are to be ready to take the midnight express to Monte Carlo. You will there keep watch on and report any possible meeting between the Russian, French, and English ministers, at present travelling about the Riviera. You will have the assistance, if necessary, of the Countess Chechany. If you need her, send her this card " (he had given me the card with his signature across it). " If meetings or conferences take place, you must obtain the tenor thereof. Here is an order for your primary expenses." He had flicked an order for 3000 marks across his desk. " Anything you wish elucidated ? "

Not having met the Countess, I had requested her description. Pushing a button, Count von Wedel had given the answering secretary an order ; within three minutes I was shown the photograph of the lady and her signature, of which I took a copy. Having no further requests I had bowed myself out.

My first act was to cash the order ; second to decide and prepare the character I wished to assume in Monte Carlo. I decided on a South African mine-owner. I know considerable amount about mining, and being well acquainted with South Africa, the Rand and Transvaal, I had the advantage of knowing my locality first. A Secret Service agent is always

careful to choose a character with which he is fully familiar. One is certain to meet, sooner or later, men in the same walk of life ; and unless one be well primed, one is bound to be "bowled out." I knew there would be South African mining men at Monte Carlo.

Procuring necessary papers, such as mining journals, quotations, a couple of South African newspapers and photographs, I went home and had my man carefully select and pack my wardrobe. I caught the midnight Lloyd Express. Selecting a pleasant middle compartment, and getting my seat registered, I made myself comfortable and began to map out a campaign. This was rather a tough problem. To be in the slightest degree successful, I had to get near, and if possible in touch with the ministers that Count von Wedel had designated. How is this to be done ? I knew it was far from easy, almost impossible, to make their casual acquaintance.

I began to cast the personality of the three men over in my mind. There was Prince K——, at that time high in the favour of the Czar. There were Delcasse of France, and Sir Edward Grey of England. All three were gyrating about the Riviera and the Savoy—ostensibly it was for their health, possibly for other reasons. In any case the health of these gentlemen seemed a matter of some concern to the German Emperor. Health trips of more than one statesman in or about the same locality are looked upon with much suspicion and promptly investigated ; more so when there is any extra political tension. At that time—it was in 1910—the air was tense, Germany was in the dark, unable to distinguish friend or foe.

Sir Edward Grey's habits were unknown to me. With Delcasse's I was somewhat familiar. Prince K——, ah, yes ! I knew him pretty well, *bon viveur*, extremely fond of a pretty face. Um ! I began to see light. Here is where the Countess might come in. By her photograph, an extremely beautiful woman ; but photographs often flatter and do not give an indication as to personality. *Festina lente*. I would see.

Five forty-five the next afternoon and I was installed at the Hotel Metropole in Monte Carlo. After a refreshing bath, I had supper served in my room, and sent for the hotel courier—this an old globe-trotter trick. Hotel couriers or dragomen are walking encyclopædias. They are good linguists, observant and shrewd. They are masters of the art of finding out things they should not know, and past grand masters in keeping their mouths shut unless you know how to open them. Not with palm oil. Oh, no, nothing so crude !

You would never get any truths or anything worth while with bribery.

I had to find out local intrigues and gossips, who was in Monte Carlo and what was doing, who were the leading demi-mondaines and gamblers. Were there any possible Secret Service men? Hence the courier, a Swiss from Ober Arau, a district of Switzerland, I luckily knew well. When he knocked at the door, I cheerily bade him come in. I made my manner as good-natured as possible. I offered him a real Medijeh cigarette. As befitting his station, he was slipping the cigarette in his pocket.

"Oh, no!" I said. "Light it, won't you? Have a little smoke with me here. I'm a bit lonesome. I want to get my bearings. Won't you join me in a glass of wine?"

That was my first oar in. After some commonplace conversation, as to how the season was, I asked:

"Anybody of interest here?"

I winked knowingly. Possibly it pleased the courier to have some one to chuckle over a secret. All my oars were in.

"At the Grand Hotel de Londres," he said slyly, "there is a gentleman who does not fool me."

I offered him another cigarette, helped him to another glass of wine.

"He is registered there as Count Techlow, but he can't fool me. He is Prince K——"

"What's he doing; gambling a lot?" (I knew he wasn't.)

"No," replied the courier, "he's keeping pretty quiet."

"Is there a Countess Techlow?"

The courier shook his head. *Buenno*! The coast seemed clear. I knew it was extremely awkward and often dangerous to tempt the quarry away from a demi-mondaine, especially at Monte Carlo. After chatting some more I bid the courier good-night. I would see the Countess the first thing in the morning.

Along towards noon I called at the Nouvel Hotel Louvre where von Wedel had told me I would find Countess Chechany. I sent in my own card bearing the name of H. van Huit, Doorn Kloof, Transvaal (the reader will recall my experience at Doorn Kloof*); also von Wedel's card with his signature.

I had to wait some time, but finally the Countess received me in her boudoir. She was in bewitching *négligé*. From the photograph I was prepared to find a very handsome woman, but shades of Helen! This was Venus, Juno and Minerva—the whole Greek and any other goddesses rolled into one!

* See page 11.

Tall and willowy, superb of figure, great dark-blue eyes, masses of blue-black wavy hair, full red lips forming a perfect Cupid's bow. But why go on—I might get too enthusiastic, and mislead the reader. After my adventure I never saw the Countess again.

I knew that by birth the Countess Chechany was a high Hungarian noblewoman. By marriage she was related to the Counts of Tolna Festetics, a leading house in Hungary. Also, she was one of those marvellously beautiful women peculiar to that country. Waving a small jewelled hand, she begged me to take a chair beside her. A cigarette was daintily poised in her fingers.

"Be seated, Mr. Van Huit of Transvaal," gazing at me with a roguish grin.

We both burst out laughing. Of course she knew what I was. Von Wedel's card showed her that. But, as her next words plainly showed, she knew a great deal more.

"I've got a badly sprained ankle, doctor. Can you do anything for me?"

I must have shown a pretty stupid face, for she laughed amusedly again. I certainly was surprised, for up to now I had never met her, and my being a doctor was known only to one or two persons in the Service. Besides, it is strictly a rule of the Imperial Secret Service never to discuss or divulge personal matters. Her attitude by no means pleased me. I cordially hate any one, especially a woman, knowing more than I do. One never knows where one is standing in a case like this. I decided not to show my curiosity, but I was determined to learn how she knew about me. Coolly I said:

"Well, Countess, you have somewhat of an advantage. But if I can be of any assistance to you, pray command me."

As answer, she sprang up, pirouetted around the room, and exclaimed:

"Now, why be peevish? If you're good and nice, I shall tell you some time all about it."

She never did, for with all her ingenuous mannerisms, my lady was about the deepest and least fathomable bit of femininity I have ever met—besides being the possessor of a devil of a temper. After some more banter, which I instigated to become somewhat acquainted with my prospective partner, I came to business.

"Do you know, Countess, the object of my mission?"

"Nothing beyond the intimation of your coming and the command to co-operate with you if necessary. So you had better enlighten me, *mon cher*."

I did so with some reservation, it being my habit not to

let any one into a thing too much, least of all a woman. I suggested that our first object was to make Prince K——'s acquaintance. As his Serene Highness resided at the Hotel de Londres, we agreed to dine there. After accepting a dainty cup of chocolate I departed, purposely returning home by way of the Londres. Here, with a little diplomacy, I managed to reserve for dinner the table I wanted, one next to the Prince. Well pleased, I later dressed, armed myself with a bouquet of La France roses, and called on my partner.

I had the roses sent up and waited. The Countess sent word that she would be down shortly. I smoked three cigarettes. Still no Countess. I have yet to meet a woman who could or would be punctual. Finally I heard the soft swish and frou-frou of silk garments and looking up saw her ladyship coming down the grand stairway. She was brilliantly robed, jewels flashed at her neck and wrists. She was of that type of beauty difficult to classify although assured of approval in any quarter of the world.

"Tired of waiting, *mon ami*?" tapping me playfully on the arm. "See, in return for your patience I am wearing your roses."

She had them pinned on her corsage. We entered our carriage and drove to the Hotel de Londres, discussing the parts we were going to play. Would the Russian Bear be caught? I wondered. When we arrived, I saw that the hotel was pretty well filled. Everybody who was anybody seemed to be there. I noticed a number of prominent American society ladies. Experience has taught me that there are three places where you meet sooner or later every known person in the world—Piccadilly Circus, the terrace of Shepheard's Hotel, Cairo, and Monte Carlo.

Remembering our diplomatic conversation of the afternoon, the *maître d'hôtel* came rushing forward and with profound bows directed us to our table, which was tastefully decorated with La France roses, the Countess' favourites (charged to expenses). As we walked slowly down the passage to our table, many eyes were turned towards us. The Countess appeared unconscious of it all. Lazily, half insolently observant, yet wholly unconcerned, she was without doubt the most strikingly beautiful woman in the assembly; this, though the society of the world seemed to fill the Londres that night. Poor K——!

As we seated ourselves, a hush fell about the immediate tables to our right and left. It was followed by a low buzzing of curious or interested, wise or ignorant, human bees. On our right I saw Prince K—— From the moment of our

entrance he had kept looking at the Countess. I watched him out of the corner of my eye, and abruptly he changed seats with one of the gentlemen at his table. Obviously his view of the Countess' face was not at the angle he wished. Screwing his monocle in his eye, he began to stare pretty consistently.

Of course this delighted me. The avidity with which his Serene Highness was swallowing the bait promised much. I thought it advisable, however, to create a little diversion, something that would drive away a possible suspicion that this was a "plant." It was perfectly obvious to all that the Prince was becoming fascinated. Also, he was losing his head, for he was showing his fascination in a rather rude manner. His staring began to attract some attention.

That was the opportunity I was looking for. Calling the *maître d'hôtel*, I requested him, pitching my voice so that it would be easily audible at the surrounding tables:

"Persuade the gentleman on our right to discontinue his annoying stare."

I saw that the Prince had heard my request. Flushing deeply red, he abruptly rose and with a bow to the Countess went out of the room. It was as I wished.

We finished our exquisite and excellently well-served dinner, and went out to the Terrace Gardens to have our café Turc and cigarettes. This, to my mind, is the most enjoyable hour of the day, especially in a place like Monte Carlo, well groomed, well fed, surrounded by an ever-varying throng of interesting people, beautiful scenery, exquisite music, the ideal *dolce far niente.*

Slowly inhaling the smoke of my excellent Medijeh, I fell into a sort of contemplative reverie while waiting for the Prince. I knew he would come. Back and forth in front of me wandered humanity, all grades and shades. Here a prince, scion of a noble house, there a parvenu, fresh from his latest stock-jobbing victory. Here a mondaine demi-mondaine with a reputation in half a dozen countries. Here a group of famous lights of the stage, there a couple of eminent statesmen. Truly a cosmopolitan crowd. What if the antecedents of some of the pleasure-seekers here were known? I recognised many and it being my business to know such things, their stories came back to me magically. Skeletons at the feast? Oh, yes, gruesome ones too. Just as well, an all-wise Providence has ordained our inability to see behind the veil. I knew that the woman opposite me could no more afford to lift her veil than I could mine.

Then one of the gentlemen from the Prince's table came

up and addressed me. First, however, he handed me a card, which I saw bore the name of Prince K——

"Monsieur," said the Prince's companion, "I'm deputed by the Prince to convey his regrets, should he have caused Madame or you any annoyance. The Prince begs permission to make his apology to Madame in person."

I replied in words to the effect that Madame being a free agent and only an acquaintance of mine, must decide this for herself.

"Personally," I added, "I have no objection."

The Countess simply nodded. The Prince's envoy bowed and went away.

He returned in a few minutes with the Prince. Mutual introductions, general chatting, the Prince confining himself exclusively to the Countess. About half an hour's talk, refreshments, and there came an arrangement for luncheon the next day at which the Countess and myself were invited to be the guests of the Prince.

The luncheon was duly given at the Hotel Londres and the Prince was a princely host. Having been invited, I had to attend. There was a theatre party that evening, however, to which I was not invited, and supper after, to which I was not invited. Indeed, when I met the Prince K—— on the grand promenade the next day, he gave me a very princely stare and kept on walking. All of which suited me perfectly well. He was in the hands of the Countess.

From afar I watched him become daily more infatuated. They were constantly driving and attending theatres together. The Prince was showering valuable presents right and left. In the midst of this, I received information that Delcasse had arrived at Nizza. The Countess had her eyes on the Prince, so this left me free to take care of Delcasse. My work was now to learn if the French minister held any meetings with Sir Edward Grey or Winston Churchill, ministers from England, who were shortly expected also to arrive at Nizza. Subsequently I guessed there would be a final meeting with the Prince. I continually and unobtrusively followed Delcasse everywhere, but nothing eventuated owing to unforeseen circumstances in the House of Commons and the Cabinet of England, Sir Edward and Churchill were unable to take their "vacation trips" in person. So they sent an emissary with important documents to Delcasse, one of which came to light in his subsequent meeting with Prince K——

On the night of the ninth of November I received a wire from the Countess. It was delivered at the Hotel Anglais, Nizza. Opening it, I read :

"Return. De Camp here. Meeting our friend."

Of course by De Camp she meant Delcasse. Clearly he had slipped away from me. "Our friend" referred to the Prince. This was news indeed! Hiring an automobile I made record time for Monte Carlo. I arrived at my hotel about three o'clock in the morning of the tenth and found awaiting me in my room, the Countess' maid. She delivered part of an important conversation which had taken place between Delcasse and the Prince, and of which I shall presently give the substance and its explanation. Instructing the maid to inform her mistress that I wished to see her at 10 a.m. at the Casino, in the Salles des Etrangers, I dismissed her. I chose the Salles des Etrangers because it was the most frequented and for that reason the least suspicious meeting-place.

We met as appointed and the Countess confirmed the maid's report. For about three hours on the evening of the ninth, Delcasse, of France, and Prince K—— were in conference in the Prince's chamber at the Hotel de Londres. Having changed her hotel and being in a chamber adjoining the Prince's, the Countess had managed to overhear most of this conversation. In her report there were naturally some blanks. She had not been able to hear every word uttered. But the purport and trend showed me it was of tremendous importance.

It was evidently an arrangement between France and Russia, with the understanding of England, to force Germany into an abject isolation. Going further, they were trying through a closer alliance of these three great powers to curtail the activities of German expansion and completely coop her up diplomatically. The Countess told me that Prince K—— and Delcasse were going to meet again that same afternoon about five o'clock. As it was absolutely imperative to obtain knowledge of the rest of the conversation I enjoined the Countess to exert all her skill to secure the details at this most important interview, and to meet me once more in a corner of the Salles des Etrangers, this time at seven o'clock.

I returned to my hotel, settled my bill and had my grip taken over to the railway station; I got a ticket for Milan. It is always advisable to lay your plans carefully for a possibly very hurried exit, the nearest friendly border in this instance being Italy. In the event of trouble arising, hurrying through France would have been out of the question. Switzerland is an independent country which would have held me up officially on being requested to do so, although they do not

extradite for political offences, but being held up is bad enough. But once across the Italian border, I was safe enough. A semi-official hint from the Wilhelmstrasse to the Quirinal would always procure an open sesame for me—no danger of being held up there. Hence the ticket for Milan.

The intervening hours I spent on the outskirts of Monte Carlo, dropping into many a quaint little wine-cellar. At dusk I entered the Salles des Etrangers of the Casino, and settling myself comfortably in the appointed corner, awaited developments. It was a trying wait. I sat there from seven to ten-thirty, smoking incessantly. I was just finishing my last cigarette and I had about come to the end of my resources in entertaining myself. One has ample time to conjecture all sorts of possible mishaps, and mishaps are deucedly uncomfortable in this sort of work.

Not to create curiosity or suspicion, by my long occupation of this particular corner, I had started a tremendous flirtation with a rather plain, rather rotund lady of the English Cook's Tour type. Her return glances and smiles attracted the amused attention of most of the passers-by, especially the attendant of that part of the Salle. This was rather good, for if one does not gamble or flirt in the Casino he is regarded by the commissaires as a *Chevalier d'Industrie*, in other words "confidence man."

Just then I saw the Countess' maid making a signal to me from the entrance door, and without as much as by your leave I hurried after her. In about ten strides I overtook the girl.

"Have you got anything for me?"

"No, sir," she replied. "But her ladyship wishes to meet you. You are please to make a rendezvous."

This was clever and suited me; knowing that she must have procured something of importance, I selected a little café, the Boulanger, close to the station, and after giving the girl a louis, I jumped into a carriage and drove there. In a short time I was joined by the Countess, who had thrown a hooded mantle over a brilliant evening gown. Quietly slipping into a chair next to me she took some folded papers out of her glove, and while fastening a little rosebud into my lapel slipped them into my pocket with the words:

"All I could obtain, but you'll find it sufficient. I'm leaving for Rome to-morrow night. Bon voyage!"

I looked at my watch and saw I had time to catch the train for Milan. No sooner was I locked in my coupé and the train in motion, when I had a good look at the papers. They were two half-sheets of notepaper, embossed with the

princely coat of arms and containing abbreviated sentences of dates, and names and a route, all in the handwriting of Delcasse and the Prince. The whole gist with her repeated, overheard snatches of conversation showed clearly an intended secret visit of the President of France to the Czar of Russia, the names of the officials to be present, and the meeting-place, the Czar's yacht, the *Staandart*, off Kronstadt. This meeting, however, did not take place, the Kaiser forestalling it by his quick action on the Moroccan situation.

From Milan I went to Berlin and within forty-eight hours the documents were delivered into the hands of Count von Wedel, and then into the hands of the Emperor. Their significance was this :

The Moroccan trouble was very ominous. Germany was in a position where, sooner or later, she would be forced to act. Before this mission the Kaiser was in the dark. France, Russia, and England did not have their cards on the table. He did not know which countries would remain neutral in case of war with France. He had suspected that there was some sort of an understanding brewing against him. The results of my mission—learning of Sir Edward Grey's message to Delcasse, Delcasse's meeting with Prince K—— confirmed this beyond all doubt.

I came near forgetting. For his indiscretion at Monte Carlo, the Czar rewarded Prince K—— by transferring him to a province in Siberia.

MY ADVENTURES AS A SPY

By

LORD BADEN-POWELL. O.M., K.C.B.

SPIES are like ghosts—people seem to have had a general feeling that there might be such things, but they did not at the same time believe in them—because they never saw them, and seldom met any one who had had first-hand experience of them. But as regards the spies, I can speak with personal knowledge in saying that they do exist, and in very large numbers, not only in England, but in every part of Europe.

As in the case of ghosts, any phenomenon which people don't understand, from a sudden crash on a quiet day to a midnight creak of a cupboard, has an effect of alarm upon nervous minds. So also a spy is spoken of with undue alarm and abhorrence, because he is somewhat of a bogey.

As a first step it is well to disabuse one's mind of the idea that every spy is necessarily the base and despicable fellow he is generally held to be. He is often both clever and brave.

Let us for the moment change the term "spy" to "investigator" or "military agent." For war purposes these agents may be divided into :

1. *Strategical and diplomatic agents*, who study the political and military conditions in peace time of all other countries which might eventually be in opposition to their own in war. These also create political disaffection and organise outbreaks, such, for instance, as spreading sedition amongst Egyptians, or in India amongst the inhabitants, or in South Africa amongst the Boer population, to bring about an outbreak, if possible, in order to create confusion and draw off troops in time of war.

2. *Tactical, military, or naval agents*, who look into minor details of armament and terrain in peace time. These also make tactical preparations on the spot, such as material for extra bridges, gun emplacements, interruption of communications, etc.

3. *Field spies.* Those who act as scouts in disguise to reconnoitre positions and to report moves of the enemy in the field of war. Amongst these are residential spies and officer agents.

All these duties are again subdivided among agents of

every grade, from ambassadors and their attachés downwards. Naval and military officers are sent to carry out special investigations by all countries, and paid detectives are stationed in likely centres to gather information.

Some years ago a report came to the War Office that a foreign Power was making gun emplacements in a position which had not before been suspected of being of military value, and they were evidently going to use it for strategical purposes.

I was sent to see whether the report was true. Of course, it would not do to go as an officer—suspicions would be aroused, one would be allowed to see nothing, and would probably be arrested as a spy. I therefore went to stay with a friendly farmer in the neighbourhood, and went out shooting every day among the partridges and snipe which abounded there. The first thing I did was to look at the country generally, and try to think which points would be most valuable as positions for artillery.

Then I went to look for partridges (and other things !) on the hills which I had noticed, and I very soon found what I wanted.

Officers were there, taking angles and measurements, accompanied by workmen, who were driving pegs into the ground and marking off lines with tapes between them.

As I passed with my gun in my hand, bag on shoulder, and dog at heel, they paid no attention to me, and from the neighbouring hills I was able to watch their proceedings.

When they went away to their meals or returned to their quarters, I went shooting over the ground they had left, and if I did not get a big bag of game, at any rate I made a good collection of drawings and measurements of the plans of the forts and emplacements which they had traced out on the ground.

So that within a few days of their starting to make them we had the plans of them all in our possession. Although they afterwards planted trees all over the sites to conceal the forts within them, and put up buildings in other places to hide them, we knew perfectly well where the emplacements were and what were their shapes and sizes.

It is generally difficult to find ordinary spies who are also sufficiently imbued with technical knowledge to be of use in gaining naval or military details. Consequently officers are often employed to obtain such information in peace time as well as in the theatre of action in war.

But with them, and especially with those of Germany, it is not easy to find men who are sufficiently good actors, or

who can disguise their appearance so well as to evade suspicion. Very many of these have visited our shores during the past few years,* but they have generally been noticed, watched, and followed, and from the line taken by them in their reconnaissance it has been easy to deduce the kind of operations contemplated in their plans.

I remember the case of a party of these motoring through Kent nominally looking at old Roman ruins. When they asked a landowner for the exact position of some of these he regretted he had not a map handy on which he could point out their position. One of the "antiquarians" at once produced a large scale map ; but it was not an English map : it had, for instance, details on it regarding water supply tanks which, though they existed, were not shown on any of our ordnance maps

Spy-catching was once one of my duties, and is perhaps the best form of education towards successful spying. I had been lucky enough to nail three and was complimented by one of the senior officers on the Commander-in-Chief's staff. We were riding home together from a big review at the time that he was talking about it, and he remarked, "How do you set about catching a spy ?" I told him of our methods and added that luck also very often came in and helped one.

Just in front of us, in the crowd of vehicles returning from the review-ground, was an open, hired Victoria in which sat a foreign-looking gentleman. I remarked that as an instance this was the sort of man I should keep an eye upon, and I should quietly follow him till I found where he lodged and then put a detective on to report his moves.

From our position on horseback close behind him we were able to see that our foreigner was reading a guide book and was studying a map of the fortifications through which we were passing. Suddenly he called to the driver to stop for a moment while he lit a match for his cigarette. The driver pulled up, and so did we. The stranger glanced up to see that the man was not looking round, and then quickly slipped a camera from under the rug which was lying on the seat in front of him, and taking aim at the entrance shaft of a new ammunition store which had just been made for our Navy, he took a snapshot.

Then hurriedly covering up the camera again he proceeded to strike matches and to light his cigarette. Then he gave the word to drive on again.

We followed close behind till we came to where a policeman was regulating the traffic. I rode ahead and gave him

* Written in 1915.

instructions so that the carriage was stopped, and the man was asked to show his permit to take photographs. He had none. The camera was taken into custody and the name and address of the owner taken " with a view to further proceedings."

Unfortunately at that time—it was many years ago —we were badly handicapped by our laws in the matter of arresting and punishing spies. By-laws allowed us to confiscate and smash unauthorised cameras, and that was all.

" Further proceedings," had they been possible, in this case would have been unnecessary, for the suspected gentleman took himself off to the Continent by the very next boat.

But it took a good deal to persuade my staff-officer friend that the whole episode was not one faked up for his special edification.

It is only human to hate to be outwitted by one more clever than yourself, and perhaps that accounts for people disliking spies with a more deadly hatred than that which they bestow on a man who drops bombs from an aeroplane indiscriminately on women and children, or who bombards cathedrals with infernal engines of war.

Nobody could say that my native spy in South Africa, Jan Grootboom, was either a contemptible or mean kind of man. He was described by one who knew him as a " white man in a black skin," and I heartily endorse the description.

Here is an instance of his work as a field spy :

Jan Grootboom was a Zulu by birth, but having lived much with white men, as a hunter and guide, he had taken to wearing ordinary clothes and spoke English perfectly well : but within him he had all the pluck and cunning of his race.

For scouting against the Matabele it was never wise to take a large party, since it would be sure to attract attention, whereas by going alone with one man, such as Grootboom, one was able to penetrate their lines and to lie hid almost among them, watching their disposition and gaining information as to their numbers, supplies, and whereabouts of their women and cattle, etc.

Now, every night was spent at this work—that is to say, the night was utilised for creeping to their positions, and one watched them during the day. But it was impossible to do this without leaving footmarks and tracks, which the sharp eyes of their scouts were not slow to discover, and it very soon dawned upon them that they were being watched, and consequently they were continually on the look-out to waylay and capture us.

One night Grootboom and I had ridden to the neighbour-

hood of one of the enemy's camps, and were lying waiting for the early dawn before we could discover exactly where they were located.

It was during the hour before sunrise that, as a rule, the enemy used to light their fires for cooking their early morning food. One could thus see exactly their position, and could rectify one's own, so as to find a place where one could lie by during the day and watch their movements.

On this occasion the first fire was lit and then another sparkled up, and yet another, but before half a dozen had been lighted Grootboom suddenly growled under his breath :

" The swine—they are laying a trap for us."

I did not understand at the moment what he meant, but he said :

" Stop here for a bit, and I will go and look."

He slipped off all his clothing and left it lying in a heap, and stole away in the darkness, practically naked. Evidently he was going to visit them to see what was going on.

The worst of spying is that it makes you always suspicious, even of your best friends. So, as soon as Grootboom was gone in one direction, I quietly crept away in another, and got among some rocks in a small kopje, where I should have some kind of a chance if he had any intention of betraying me and returning with a few Matabele to capture me.

For an hour or two I lay there, until presently I saw Grootboom creeping back through the grass—alone.

Ashamed of my doubts, I therefore came out and went to our rendezvous, and found him grinning all over with satisfaction while he was putting on his clothes again. He said that he had found, as he had expected, an ambush laid for us. The thing that had made him suspicious was that the fires, instead of lighting up all over the hillside at different points about the same time, had been lighted in steady succession one after another, evidently by one man going round. This struck him as suspicious, and he then assumed that it was done to lead us on, if we were anywhere around, to go and examine more closely the locality.

He had crept in towards them by a devious path, from which he was able to perceive a whole party of the Matabele lying low in the grass by the track which we should probably have used in getting there, and they would have pounced upon us and captured us.

To make sure of this suspicion he crept round till near their stronghold, and coming from there he got in among them and chatted away with them, finding out what was their intention with regard to ourselves, and also what were their plans for

the near future. Then having left them, and walked boldly back towards their stronghold, he crept away amongst some rocks and rejoined me.

His was an example of the work of a field spy which, although in a way it may be cunning and deceitful, at the same time demands the greatest personal courage and astuteness. It is something greater than the ordinary bravery of a soldier in action, who is carried on by the enthusiasm of those around him under the leadership of an officer, and with the competition and admiration of others.

The pluck of the man who goes out alone, unobserved and unapplauded, and at the risk of his life, is surely equally great.

The Boers used field spies freely against us in South Africa.

One English-speaking Boer used to boast how, during the war, he made frequent visits to Johannesburg dressed in the uniform taken from a British major who had been killed in action. He used to ride past the sentries, who, instead of shooting him, merely saluted, and he frequented the clubs and other resorts of the officers, picking up such information as he required from them first-hand, till evening came, and he was able to ride back to his commando.

The espionage system of the Germans far exceeds that of any other country in its extent, cost and organisation. It was thoroughly exposed after the war with France in 1870, when it was definitely shown that the German Government had an organisation of over 20,000 paid informers stationed in France, and controlled by one man, Stieber, for both political and military purposes.

To such completeness were their machinations carried that when Jules Favre came to Versailles to treat about the surrender of Paris with the headquarter staff of the German army he was met at the station by a carriage, of which the coachman was a German spy, and was taken to lodge in the house which was the actual headquarters of the spy department. Stieber himself was the valet, recommended to him as "a thoroughly trustworthy servant." Stieber availed himself of his position to go through his master's pockets and dispatch cases daily, collecting most valuable data and information for Bismarck.

Somehow, on the surface, suspicion of the German spy methods seemed to have subsided since that date, although at the time widely known throughout Europe. But their methods have been steadily elaborated and carried into practice ever since, not in France alone, but in all the countries on the Continent, and also in Great Britain.

Fortunately for us, we are as a nation considered by the others to be abnormally stupid, therefore easily to be spied upon. But it is not always safe to judge entirely by appearances.

Our Ambassador at Constantinople some years ago had the appearance of a cheery, bluff, British farmer, with nothing below the surface in his character, and he was therefore looked upon as fair game by all his intriguing rivals in Eastern politics. It was only after repeated failures of their different missions they found that in every case they were out-intrigued by this innocent-looking gentleman, who below the surface was as cunning as a fox and as clever a diplomat as could be found in all the service.

And so it has been with us British. Foreign spies stationed in our country saw no difficulty in completely hoodwinking so stupid a people ; they never supposed that the majority of them have all been known to our Secret Service Department and carefully watched, unknown to themselves.

Few of them ever landed in this country without undergoing the scrutiny of an unobtrusive little old gentleman with tall hat and umbrella, the wag of whose finger sent a detective on the heels of the visitor until his actual business and location were assured and found to be satisfactory.

For years the correspondence of these gentry has been regularly opened, noted, and sent on. They were not as a rule worth arresting, the information sent was not of any urgent importance, and so long as they went on thinking that they were unnoticed, their superiors in their own country made no effort to send more astute men in their place. Thus we knew what the enemy were looking for, and we knew what information they had received, and this as a rule was not of much account.

On August 4th, the day before the declaration of war, the twenty leading spies were formally arrested and over 200 of their minor agents were also taken in hand, and thus their organisation failed them at the moment when it was wanted most. Steps were also taken to prevent any substitutes being appointed in their places. Private wireless stations were dismantled, and by means of traps those were discovered which had not been voluntarily reported and registered.

It used to amuse some of us to watch the foreign spies at work on our ground. One especially interested me, who set himself up ostensibly as a coal merchant, but never dealt in a single ounce of coal. His daily reconnaissance of the country, his noting of the roads, and his other movements entailed in preparing his reports, were all watched and re-

corded. His letters were opened in the post, sealed up, and sent on. His friends were observed and shadowed on arriving —as they did—at Hull instead of in London. And all the time he was plodding along, wasting his time, quite innocent of the fact that he was being watched, and was incidentally giving us a fine amount of information.

Another came only for a few hours, and was away again before we could collar him ; but, knowing his moves, and what photographs he had taken, I was able to write to him, and tell him that had I known beforehand that he wished to photograph these places, I could have supplied him with some ready-made, as the forts which they recorded were now obsolete.

On the other hand, the exceedingly stupid Englishmen who wandered about foreign countries sketching cathedrals, or catching butterflies, or fishing for trout, were merely laughed at as harmless lunatics. These have even invited officials to look at their sketchbooks, which, had they had any suspicion or any eyes in their heads, would have revealed plans and armaments of their own fortresses interpolated among the veins of the botanist's drawings of leaves or on the butterflies' wings of the entomologist.

Once I went " butterfly hunting " in Dalmatia. Cattaro, the capital, has been the scene of much bombarding during the Great War.

More than a hundred years ago it was bombarded by the British fleet and taken. It was then supposed to be impregnable. It lies at the head of a loch some fifteen miles long, and in some parts but a few hundred yards wide, in a trough between mountains. From Cattaro, at the head of the loch, a zigzag road leads up the mountainside over the frontier into Montenegro.

When the British ships endeavoured to attack from the seaward, the channel was closed by chains and booms put across it. But the defenders had reckoned without the resourcefulness of the British " handyman," and a few days later, to the utter astonishment of the garrison, guns began to bombard them from the top of a neighbouring mountain !

The British captain had landed his guns on the Adriatic shore, and by means of timber slides rigged up on the mountainside he had hauled his guns bodily up the rocky steeps to the very summit of the mountain.

But other batteries have since been built upon these mountain-tops, and it was my business to investigate their positions, strength, and armaments.

I went armed with most effective weapons for the purpose,

which have served me well in many a similar campaign. I took a sketchbook, in which were numerous pictures—some finished, others only partly done—of butterflies of every degree and rank, from a "Red Admiral" to a "Painted Lady."

Carrying this book and a colour-box and a butterfly net in my hand, I was above all suspicion to any one who met me on the lonely mountainside, even in the neighbourhood of the forts.

I was hunting butterflies, and it was always a good introduction with which to go to any one who was watching me with suspicion. Quite frankly, with my sketchbook in hand, I would ask innocently whether he had seen such-and-such a butterfly in the neighbourhood, as I was anxious to catch one. Ninety-nine out of a hundred did not know one butterfly from another—any more than I do—so one was on fairly safe ground in that way, and they thoroughly sympathised with the mad Englishman who was hunting these insects.

They did not look sufficiently closely into the sketches of butterflies to notice that the delicately drawn veins of the wings were exact representations, in plan, of their own fort, and that the spots on the wings denoted the number and position of guns and their different calibres.

On another occasion I found it a simple disguise to go as a fisherman into the country which I wanted to examine.

My business was to find some passes in the mountains, and report whether they were feasible for the passage of troops. I therefore wandered up the various streams which led over the hills, and by quietly fishing about I was able to make surveys of the whole neighbourhood.

But on one occasion a countryman constituted himself my guide, and insisted on sticking to me *all* the morning, showing me places where fish could be caught. I was not, as a matter of fact, much of a fisherman at that time, nor had I any desire to catch fish, and my tackle was very ramshackle for the purpose.

I flogged the water assiduously with an impossible fly, just to keep the man's attention from my real work, in the hope that he would eventually get tired of it and go away. But not he! He watched me with the greatest interest for a long time, and eventually explained that he did not know anything about fly-fishing, but had a much better system of getting the fish together before casting a worm or slug among them.

His system he then proceeded to demonstrate, which was to spit into the water. This certainly attracted a run of fish,

and then he said that if only he had a worm he could catch any number.

I eventually got rid of him by sending him to procure such, and while he was away I made myself scarce and clambered over the ridge to another valley.

The matter of disguise is not so much one of a theatrical make-up—although this is undoubtedly a useful art—as of being able to assume a totally different character, change of voice and mannerisms, especially of gait in walking and appearance from behind.

This point is so often forgotten by beginners, and yet it is one of the most important.

I was at one time watched by a detective who one day was a soldierly-looking fellow and the next an invalid with a patch over his eye. I could not believe it was the same man until I watched him from behind and saw him walking, when at once his individuality was apparent.

For mannerisms, a spy has by practice to be able to show an impediment in his speech one day, whereas the next a wiggle of an eyelid or a snuffling at the nose will make him appear a totally different being.

For a quick change, it is wonderful what difference is made by merely altering your hat and necktie. It is usual for a person addressing another to take note of his necktie, and probably of his hat, if of nothing else, and thus it is often useful to carry a necktie and a cap of totally different hue from that which you are wearing, ready to change immediately in order to escape recognition a few minutes later.

I learnt this incidentally through being interviewed some years ago at a railway station. A few minutes after the ordeal I found myself close up to my interviewer, when he was re-telling the incident to a brother journalist, who was also eager to find me. "He is down there, in one of the last carriages of the train. You will know him at once; he is wearing a green Homburg hat and a red tie, and a black coat."

Fortunately I had a grey overcoat on my arm, in which was a travelling cap and a comforter. Diving into the waiting-room, I effected a "quick change" into these, crammed my hat into my pocket, and tottered back, with an invalid shuffle, to my carriage. I re-entered it under the nose of the waiting reporter without being suspected, and presently had the pleasure of being carried away before him unassailed.

On a recent occasion in my knowledge a man was hunted down into a back street which was a *cul-de-sac*, with no exit from it. He turned into the door of a warehouse and went

up some flights of stairs, hoping to find a refuge, but, finding none, he turned back and came down again and faced the crowd which was waiting outside, uncertain which house he had entered.

By assuming extreme lameness in one leg, hunching up one shoulder, and jamming his hat down over a distorted-looking face, he was able to limp boldly down among them without one of them suspecting his individuality.

In regard to disguises, hair on the face—such as moustache or beard—are very usually resorted to for altering a man's appearance, but these are perfectly useless in the eye of a trained detective unless the eyebrows also are changed in some way.

It fell to my lot at one time to live as a plumber in South-east London, and I grew a small " goatee " beard, which was rather in vogue amongst men of that class at that time.

One day, in walking past the Naval and Military Club in Piccadilly in my workman's get-up, I passed an old friend, a major in the Horse Artillery, and almost without thinking I accosted him by his regimental nickname. He stared and wondered, and then supposed that I had been a man in his battery, and could not believe his eyes when I revealed my identity.

I was never suspected by those among whom I went, and with whom I become intimate. I had nominally injured my arm in an accident and carried it in a sling, and was thus unable to work, or what also was a blessing, to join in fights in which my friends from time to time got involved. My special companion was one Jim Bates, a carpenter. I lost sight of him for some years, and when next I met him he was one of the crowd at a review at Aldershot, where I was in full rig as an Hussar officer. It was difficult to persuade him that I was his former friend the plumber.

Later on, when employed on a reconnaissance mission in South Africa, I had grown a red beard to an extent that would have disguised me from my own mother. Coming out of the post office of a small country town, to my surprise I came up against the colonel of my regiment, who was there for an outing. I at once—forgetting my disguise—accosted him with a cheery " Hallo, Colonel, I didn't know you were here," and he turned on me and stared for a minute or two, and then responded huffily that he did not know who I was. As he did not appear to want to, I went my ways, and only reminded him months later of our brief meeting !

A secret that one picked up at the game of Hide-and-Seek was, if possible, to get above the level of the hunter's eye, and

to "freeze"—that is, to sit tight without a movement, and, although not in actual concealment, you are very apt to escape notice by so doing. I found it out long ago by lying flat along the top of an ivy-clad wall when my pursuers passed within a few feet of me without looking up at me. I put it to the proof later on by sitting on a bank beside the road, just above the height of a man, but so near that I might have touched a passerby with a fishing-rod; and there I sat without any concealment and counted fifty-four wayfarers, out of whom no more than eleven noticed me.

The knowledge of this fact came in useful on one of my investigating tours. Inside a great high wall lay a dockyard in which, it was rumoured, a new power-house was being erected, and possibly a dry dock was in course of preparation.

It was early morning; the gates were just opened; the workmen were beginning to arrive, and several carts of materials were waiting to come in. Seizing the opportunity of the gates being open, I gave a hurried glance in, as any ordinary passerby might do. I was promptly ejected by the policeman on duty in the lodge.

I did not go far. My intention was to get inside somehow and to see what I could. I watched the first of the carts go in, and noticed that the policeman was busily engaged in talking to the leading wagoner, while the second began to pass through the gate. In a moment I jumped alongside it on the side opposite to the janitor, and so passed in and continued to walk with the vehicle as it turned to the right and wound its way round the new building in course of construction.

I then noticed another policeman ahead of me and so I kept my position by the cart, readapting its cover in order to avoid him. Unfortunately in rounding the corner I was spied by the first policeman, and he immediately began to shout to me (*see map*). I was deaf to his remarks and walked on as unconcernedly as a guilty being could till I placed the corner of the new building between him and me. Then I fairly hooked it along the back of the building and rounded the far corner of it. As I did so I saw out of the tail of my eye that he was coming full speed after me and was calling policeman No. 2 to his aid. I darted like a red-shank round the next corner out of sight of both policemen, and looked for a method of escape.

The scaffolding of the new house towered above me, and a ladder led upwards on to it. Up this I went like a lamplighter, keeping one eye on the corner of the building lest I should be followed.

I was half-way up when round the corner came one of the policemen. I at once "froze." I was about fifteen feet above sea level and not twenty yards from him. He stood undecided with his legs well apart, peering from side to side in every direction to see where I had gone, very anxious and shifty. I was equally anxious but immovable.

Presently he drew nearer to the ladder and, strangely enough, I felt safer when he came below me, and he passed almost under me, looking in at the doorways of the unfinished building. Then he doubtfully turned and looked back at a shed behind him, thinking I might have gone in there, and

finally started off, and ran on round the next corner of the building. The moment he disappeared I finished the rest of my run up the ladder and safely reached the platform of the scaffolding.

The workmen were not yet upon the building, so I had the whole place to myself. My first act was to look for another ladder as a line of escape in case of being chased. It is always well to have a back door to your hiding-place; that is one of the essentials in scouting.

Presently I found a short ladder leading from my platform to the stage below, but it did not go to the ground. Peering quietly over the scaffolding, I saw my friend the policeman

below, still at fault. I blessed my stars that he was no tracker, and therefore had not seen my footmarks leading to the foot of the ladder.

Then I proceeded to take note of my surroundings and to gather information. Judging from the design of the building, its great chimneys, etc., I was actually on the new power-house. From my post I had an excellent view over the dock-yard, and within 100 feet of me were the excavation works of the new dock, whose dimensions I could easily estimate.

I whipped out my prismatic compass and quickly took the bearings of two conspicuous points on the neighbouring hills, and so fixed the position which could be marked on a large-scale map for purposes of shelling the place, if desired.

Meanwhile my pursuer had called the other policeman to him, and they were in close confabulation immediately below me, where I could watch them through a crack between two of the footboards. They had evidently come to the conclusion that I was not in the power-house as the interior was fully open to view, and they had had a good look into it. Their next step was to examine the goods shed close by, which was evidently full of building lumber, etc.

One man went into it while the other remained outside on the line that I should probably take for escaping, that is, between it and the boundary wall leading to the gateway. By accident rather than by design he stood close to the foot of my ladder, and thus cut off my retreat in that direction. While they were thus busy they were leaving the gate unguarded, and I thought it was too good a chance to be missed, so, returning along the scaffolding until I reached the small ladder, I climbed down this on to the lower story, and, seeing no one about, I quickly swarmed down one of the scaffolding poles and landed safely on the ground close behind the big chimney of the building.

Here I was out of sight, although not far from the policeman guarding the ladder; and, taking care to keep the corner of the building between us, I made my way round to the back of the lodge, and then slipped out of the gate without being seen.

I was once in a country where the mountain troops on their frontier were said to be of a wonderfully efficient kind, but nobody knew much about their organisation or equipment or their methods of working, so I was sent to see if I could find out anything about them. I got in amongst the mountains at the time when their annual manœuvres were going on, and I found numbers of troops quartered in the valleys and billeted in all the villages. But these all appeared

to be the ordinary type of troops, infantry, artillery of the line, etc. The artillery were provided with sledges by which the men could pull the guns up the mountainsides with ropes, and the infantry were supplied with alpenstocks to help them in getting over the bad ground. For some days I watched the manœuvres, but saw nothing very striking to report.

Then one evening in passing through a village where they were billeted I saw a new kind of soldier coming along with three pack-mules. He evidently belonged to those mountain forces of which, so far, I had seen nothing. I got into conversation with him, and found that he had come down from the higher ranges in order to get supplies for his company which was high up among the snow peaks, and entirely out of reach of the troops manœuvring on the lower slopes.

He incidentally told me that the force to which he belonged was a very large one, composed of artillery and infantry, and that they were searching amongst the glaciers and the snows for another force which was coming as an enemy against them, and they hoped to come into contact with them probably the very next day. He then roughly indicated to me the position in which his own force was bivouacking that night, on the side of a high peak called the "Wolf's Tooth."

By condoling with him on the difficult job he would have to get through, and suggesting impossible roads by which he could climb, he eventually let out to me exactly the line which the path took, and I recognised that it would be possible to arrive there during the night without being seen.

So after dark, when the innkeeper thought I was safely in bed, I quietly made my way up the mountainside to where the "Wolf's Tooth" stood up against the starry sky as a splendid landmark to guide me. There was no difficulty in passing through the village with its groups of soldiers strolling about off duty, but on the roads leading out of it many sentries were posted, and I feared that they would scarcely let me pass without inquiring as to who I was and where I was going.

So I spent a considerable time in trying to evade these, and was at last fortunate in discovering a storm drain leading between high walls up a steep bank into an orchard, through which I was able to slip away unseen by the sentries guarding the front of the village. I climbed up by such paths and goat tracks as I could find leading in the direction desired. I failed to strike the mule path indicated by my friend the driver, but with the peak of the Wolf's Tooth outlined above me against the stars, I felt that I could not go far wrong—and so it proved in the event.

It was a long and arduous climb, but just as dawn began to light up the eastern sky I found myself safely on the crest, and the twinkling of the numerous camp-fires showed me where the force was bivouacked which I had come to see.

As the daylight came on the troops began to get on the move, and, after early coffee, were beginning to spread themselves about the mountainside, taking up positions ready for attack or defence, so as it grew lighter I hastened to find for myself a comfortable little knoll, from which I hoped to be able to see all that went on without myself being seen ; and for a time all went particularly well.

Troops deployed themselves in every direction. Look-out men with telescopes were posted to spy on the neighbouring hills, and I could see where the headquarters staff were gathered together to discuss the situation. Gradually they came nearer to the position I myself was occupying, and divided themselves into two parties ; the one with the general remained standing where they were, while the other came in the direction of the mound on which I was lying.

Then to my horror some of them began to ascend my stronghold.

I at once stood up and made no further efforts at concealment, but got out my sketchbook and started to make a drawing of "Dawn Among the Mountains." I was very soon noticed, and one or two officers walked over to me and entered into conversation, evidently anxious to find out who I was and what was my business there.

My motto is that a smile and a stick will carry you through any difficulty ; the stick was obviously not politic on this occasion ; I therefore put on a double extra smile and showed them my sketchbook, explaining that the one ambition of my life was to make a drawing of the Wolf's Tooth by sunrise.

They expressed a respectful interest, and then explained that their object in being there was to make an attack from the Wolf's Tooth on the neighbouring mountain, provided that the enemy were actually in possession of it. I on my part showed a mild but tactful interest in their proceedings.

The less interest I showed, the more keen they seemed to be to explain matters to me, until eventually I had the whole of their scheme exposed before me, illustrated by their own sketch maps of the district, which were far more detailed and complete than anything of the kind I had seen before.

In a short time we were on the best of terms ; they had coffee going which they shared with me, while I distributed my cigarettes and chocolates amongst them. They expressed

surprise at my having climbed up there at that early hour, but were quite satisfied when I explained that I came from Wales, and at once jumped to the conclusion that I was a Highlander, and asked whether I wore a kilt when I was at home.

In the middle of our exchange of civilities the alarm was given that the enemy was in sight, and presently we saw through our glasses long strings of men coming from all directions towards us over the snows. Between us and the enemy lay a vast and deep ravine with almost perpendicular sides, traversed here and there by zigzagging goat tracks.

Officers were called together, the tactics of the fight were described to them, and in a few minutes the battalion and company commanders were scattered about studying with their glasses the opposite mountain, each, as they explained to me at the time, picking out for himself and for his men a line for ascending to the attack.

Then the word was given for the advance, and the infantry went off in long strings of men armed with alpenstocks and ropes. Ropes were used for lowering each other down bad places, and for stringing the men together when they got on to the snows to save them from falling into crevasses, etc. But the exciting point of the day was when the artillery proceeded to move down into the ravine; the guns were all carried in sections on the backs of mules, as well as their ammunition and spare parts.

In a few minutes tripods were erected, the mules were put into slings, guns and animals were then lowered one by one into the depths below until landed on practicable ground. Here they were loaded up again and got into their strings for climbing up the opposite mountains, and in an incredibly short space of time both mules and infantry were to be seen, like little lines of ants, climbing by all the available tracks which could be found leading towards the icefields above.

The actual results of the field day no longer interested me; I had seen what I had come for—the special troops, their guns, their supply and hospital arrangements, their methods of moving in this apparently impassable country, and their maps and ways of signalling.

All was novel, all was practical. For example, on looking at one of the maps shown to me, I remarked that I should have rather expected to find on it every goat track marked, but the officer replied that there was no need for that; everyone of his men was born in this valley; and knew every goat track over the mountain. Also a goat track

did not remain for more than a few weeks, or at most a few months, owing to landslips and wash-outs; they are continually being altered, and to mark them on a map would lead to confusion.

On another occasion I wanted to ascertain what value there was in the musketry training of a foreign infantry. Also it had been reported that they had recently acquired a new form of machine-gun which was a particularly rapid firer and very accurate in its effects. Its calibre was known, and its general pattern (from photographs), but its actual capabilities were still a matter of conjecture.

On this occasion I thought the simplest way would be to to undisguised. Without any concealment I went to stay in garrison towns where I happened to know one or two officers. I obtained introductions to other officers, and gradually became their companion at meals and at their evening entertainments. They mounted me on their horses, I rode with them on their rounds of duty, and I came to be an attendant at their field days and manœuvres; but whenever we approached the rifle ranges I was always politely but firmly requested to go no further, but to await their return, since the practice was absolutely confidential. I could gain no information from them as to what went on within the enclosure where the rifle range was hidden.

Two of my English friends one day incautiously stopped at the entrance gate to one of the ranges, and were promptly arrested and kept in the guard-room for some hours, and finally requested to leave the place, without getting much satisfaction out of it. So I saw that caution was necessary. Little by little, especially after some very cheerful evenings, I elicited a certain amount of information from my friends as to what the new machine-gun did and was likely to do, and how their soldiers could of course never hit a running target, since it was with the greatest difficulty they hit the standing one at all. But more than this it was impossible to get.

However, I moved on to another military station, where as a stranger I tried another tack. The rifle ranges were surrounded by a belt of trees, outside of which was an unclimbable fence guarded by two sentries, one on either side. It seemed impssible to get into or even near the range without considerable difficulty.

One day I sauntered carelessly down in the direction of the range at a point far away from the entrance gate, and here I lay down on the grass as if to sleep, but in reality to listen and take the rate of the shooting from the sound, and

also the amount of success by the sound of the hits on the iron target. Having gained a certain amount of data in this way, I approached more nearly in the hope of getting a sight of what was going on.

While the sentry's back was turned I made a rush for the fence, and though I could not get over, I found a loose plank through which I was able to get a good view of what was happening.

While engaged at this, to my horror the sentry suddenly turned on his tracks and came back towards me. But I had been prepared against such eventualities, and jamming back the plank into its place, I produced from my pocket a bottle of brandy which I had brought for the purpose. Half of it had been already sprinkled over my clothes, so that when the man approached he found me in a state of drunkenness, smelling vilely of spirits, and profuse in my offers to him to share the bottle.

A big new Turkish fort had been recently built, and my business was to get some idea of its plan and construction. From my inn in the town I sauntered out early one morning before sunrise, hoping to find no sentries awake, so that I could take the necessary angles and pace the desired bases in order to plot in a fairly accurate plan of it.

To some extent I had succeeded when I noticed among the sandhills another fellow looking about, and, it seemed to me, trying to dodge me. This was rather ominous, and I spent some of my time trying to evade this "dodger," imagining that he was necessarily one of the guard attempting my capture.

In evading him, unfortunately, I exposed myself rather more than usual to view from the fort, and presently was challenged by one of the sentries. I did not understand his language, but I could understand his gesture well enough when he presented his rifle and took deliberate aim at me. This induced me to take cover as quickly as might be behind a sandhill, where I sat down and waited for a considerable time to allow the excitement to cool down.

Presently, who should I see creeping round the corner of a neighbouring sandhill but my friend the "dodger"! It was too late to avoid him, and the moment he saw me he appeared to wish to go away rather than to arrest me. We then recognised that we were mutually afraid of each other, and therefore came together with a certain amount of diffidence on both sides.

However, we got into conversation, in French, and I very soon found that, although representatives of different nation-

alities, we were both at the same game of making a plan of the fort. We therefore joined forces, and behind a sandhill we compared notes as to what information we had already gained, and then devised a little plan by which to complete the whole scheme.

My friend took his place in a prominent position with his back to the fort and commenced to smoke, with every appearance of indifference to the defence work behind him. This was meant to catch the sentry's eye and attract his attention while I did some creeping and crawling and got round the other side of the work, where I was able to complete our survey in all its details.

It was late that night when we met in the "dodger's" bedroom, and we made complete tracings and finished drawings, each of us taking his own copy for his own headquarters. A day or two later we took steamer together for Malta, where we were to part on our respective homeward journeys—he on his way back to Italy.

As we both had a day or two to wait at Malta, I acted as host to him during his stay. As we entered the harbour I pointed out to him the big 110-ton guns which at that time protected the entrance, and were visible to anybody with two eyes in his head. I pointed out various other interesting batteries to him which were equally obvious, but I omitted to mention other parts which would have been of greater interest to him.

He came away from Malta, however, with the idea that, on the whole, he had done a good stroke of business for his Government by going there, and convinced of his luck in getting hold of a fairly simple thing in the shape of myself to show him around.

A new method of illuminating the battlefield at night had been invented on the Continent.

A chemical substance had been manufactured which enabled a user to turn on a strong light over a wide space at any moment.

Rumour said that it was as powerful as a searchlight, and yet could be carried in your pocket. But great secrecy was observed both regarding its composition and its experimental trials.

In the same army a new kind of observation balloon was said to be on trial equipped with some very up-to-date apparatus.

Also it was reported that, in addition to these aids to effective reconnaissance, a new method of swimming rivers by cavalry had been invented by which every man and horse

in a cavalry division could cross wide rivers without difficulty or delay.

Owing to political strain going on in Europe at the time there was the possibility that these rumours might have been purposely set on foot, like many others, with a view to giving some moral prestige to the army concerned.

It became my duty to investigate as far as possible what amount of truth lay in them.

It was a difficult country to work in owing to the very stringent police arrangements against spies of every kind, and it looked to be a most unpromising task to elicit what I wanted to know, because one was sure of being watched at every turn. As I afterwards discovered, it was through this multiplicity of police arrangements that one was able to get about with comparative ease, because if one went boldly enough it immediately argued to the watchful policeman that some one else was sure to be observing you.

Moreover, spies generally do their work single-handed, and on this occasion I was accompanied by my brother, and this made it easier for us to go about as a pair of tourists interested in the country generally. A man travelling alone is much more liable to draw attention upon himself, and therefore to go about under suspicion.

Our entry into the country was not altogether fortunate, because while yet in the train we managed to get into trouble with the guard over a window which he insisted on shutting when we wanted it open. In the same carriage with us was a gentleman of some standing in the country, and in a fit of absent-mindedness I made a little sketch of him. I had just completed it when an arm reached down over my shoulder from behind and the picture was snatched away by the observant guard of the train and taken off to be used as evidence against me.

The guard of a train in this country, I may say, ranks apparently much the same as a colonel in the army, and therefore is not a man to be trifled with. On our arrival at the terminus we found a sort of guard of honour of gendarmes waiting for us on the platform, and we were promptly marched off to the police office to account for our procedure in the train by daring to open the window when the guard wished it closed, and for drawing caricatures of a " high-born " man in the train.

We made no secret as to our identity and handed our cards to the commissary of police when we were brought up before him. He was—till that moment—glaring at us fiercely, evidently deciding what punishment to give us before he had

heard our case at all. But when he saw my brother's name as an officer of the Guards, he asked, "Does this mean in the Guards of her Majesty Queen Victoria?" When he heard it was so his whole demeanour changed. He sprang from his seat, begged us to be seated, and explained it was all a mistake. Evidently Guards in his country were in very high repute. He explained to us there were certain little irritating rules on the railway which had to be enforced, but, of course, in our case we were not to be bound by such small bye-laws, and with profuse apologies he bowed us out of the office, without a stain upon our characters.

We did not live long without the stain. Our first anxiety was to find where and how it would be possible to see some of this equipment for which we had come to the country. Manœuvres were going on at a place some fifty miles distant, and there, as tourists, we betook ourselves without delay. We put up at a small inn not far from the railway-station, and for the next few days we did immense walking tours, following up the troops and watching them at their work over a very extended area of country.

At last one day we sighted a balloon hanging in the sky, and we made a bee-line for it until we arrived at its station. When it was hauled down and anchored to the ground the men went off to the camp to get their dinners, and the balloon was left without a soul to guard it. It was not long before we were both inside the car, taking note of everything in the shape of the instruments and their makers' names, and so had all the information it was possible to get before the men came back.

Our next step was to see this wonderful illuminant for night work, and in the course of our wanderings we came across a large fort from which searchlights had been showing the previous night. There were notice-boards round this fort at a distance of about twenty yards apart stating that nobody was allowed within this circle of notices, and we argued that if once we were inside any sentry or detective would naturally suppose we had leave to be there.

We tried the idea, and it worked splendidly. We walked calmly through camps and past sentries without a tremor and not a question was asked us. Once within this line we were able to get directly into the fort, and there we strolled along as if the place belonged to us.

There is a certain amount of art required in making yourself not appear to be a stranger in a new place.

In the minor matter of hats, boots, and necktie it is well to wear those bought in the country you are visiting. other-

wise your British-made articles are sure to attract the attention of a watchful policeman.

In the matter of demeanour you behave as a native would do who was accustomed to being there.

Walking into a strange fort must be carried out much on the same lines as you would adopt in entering a strange town, only more so. You walk as if with a set purpose to get to a certain part of it, as though you knew the way perfectly, and without showing any kind of interest in what is around you. If you pass an officer or dignitary whom you see everybody saluting, salute him too, so that you do not appear singular. When you want to observe any special feature you loaf about reading a newspaper or, if in a town, by looking at all you want to see as reflected in a shop window.

The penalty for spying in this country was five years without the option of a fine, or even of a trial.

Having walked in like this, and having successfully walked out again—which is quite another matter—we felt elated with our success and hung about till nightfall and tried it again after dark. This was no easy job, as the place was surrounded by outposts very much on the *qui vive* for an enemy that was to make a manœuvre attack during the night. By keeping to leeward of the general position one was able to quietly creep along, sniffing the breeze, until one could judge where there was an outpost and where there was open ground, and in this manner, smelling our way as we went, we were able to creep through between the outposts and so gained the fort.

This time it meant slipping through unperceived as far as possible, and in this we succeeded equally well. By good fortune we arrived just before experiments commenced with the illuminating rockets. Everybody's attention was centred on these and no one had time to notice or observe what we were doing. We watched the preparations and also the results, and having studied the routine and the geography of the practice we were in the end able to help ourselves to some of the rockets and the lighting composition, and with these we eventually made off. Without delay we placed our treasures in the hands of a trusty agent who transferred them at once to England.

Our next step was to see how crossing the river was carried out by the cavalry. From information received we presented ourselves at a certain spot on the river at a little before ten one morning. The official attachés had received notice that a brigade of cavalry would swim the river at this point at ten o'clock, and at ten o'clock their special train was due to arrive there.

We were there, fortunately, half an hour beforehand, and we saw the whole brigade come down to the river and file across a fairly deep ford, where the horses got wet to some extent, but they did not swim.

On the far bank a few men were left behind. These, as it turned out, were all the men and horses who could actually swim well, and as the train arrived and the attachés disembarked on to the bank they found the major part of the brigade already arrived, dripping wet, and the remainder just swimming over at that moment.

Of course in their reports they stated that they had seen the whole brigade swimming over. But this is how reports very often get about which are not strictly true.

Emboldened by our success in getting into the fort by day and night, we then continued the experiment for several nights in succession, watching the further practice with searchlights, star shells, and light rockets. We had, however, collected all the information that was necessary, and there was no need for us to go there again. But news reached us that there was to be a final show for the Emperor himself, and I could not resist the temptation of going once more to the fort, as I expected there would be a grand pyrotechnic display for this occasion.

I got there in good time before the Emperor's arrival, and made my way into the place as usual, my brother remaining outside to see the effect of the lights from the attacker's point of view. Inside, however, all was not quite the same as it had been on previous occasions. There were a very large number of officers collected there, and a too larger number of police officers for my liking. I, therefore, repented of my intention and took myself out again.

Then as I walked back along the road in the dark I noticed the lights of the Emperor's *cortege* coming along towards me. As the first carriage passed me I did the worst thing in the world I could have done at such a moment—I turned my head away to avoid being recognised in the lamplight. My action made the occupants of the first carriage suspicious. They were some of the staff officers of the Emperor.

In a moment they stopped the carriage, rushed at me, and with scarcely a word seized and hustled me into the carriage with them, and drove back to the fort again. They asked me a few questions as to who I was and why I was there, and on arrival at the fort I was handed over to some other officers and again asked my business.

I could only say that I was an Englishman who had been

looking on at the manœuvres as a spectator and was anxious to find my way to the station (which was some ten miles away). This was all fairly true, but not quite good enough for them, and they presently packed me into a carriage and sent me back—in charge of an officer—to the station, with a view to my being handed over to the police and removed to the capital.

It was in the days of my apprenticeship, and I had been exceedingly foolish in taking a few notes, which, although undecipherable, perhaps would none the less be used as evidence against me.

Therefore, so soon as we were under way I made it my business to quietly tear these notes up into small pieces, and to drop them out of the carriage window whenever my guardian was looking the other way. When we arrived at the station there was some little time to wait, and I asked if I might go to the inn and collect my belongings. Permission was granted to me, and I was taken there under the charge of a police officer.

Hastily I packed my bag, and the good officer endeavoured to help me, packing up anything he could see in the room and thrusting it in with my things. Unfortunately he kept packing my brother's things in as well, and so when his back was turned I thrust them back into my brother's bed, for I did not want it known he was about there too.

Having finally filled my portmanteau, my next care was to leave a warning lest he too should be entrapped. So while ostensibly paying the bill to the landlord of the house, who had been called up by the police, I wrote a warning note on a scrap of paper, which I jammed on the candle, where my brother could not fail to find it when he came home later on, and then I went off to the station, and was taken back to the capital by a Hussar officer of congenial temperament.

With all good feeling and the true hospitality of his kind, he insisted on buying half a dozen bottles of beer for my consumption—since I was an Englishman—and he helped me with the ordeal during the small hours of the morning.

On reaching the capital I was put into a hotel, my passport taken from me, and I was told that I should be expected to remain there until called for. In the meantime I might go about the city, but was not to take myself away without permission. I very soon found that I was being watched by a detective told off for the purpose, and then it was that I made the acquaintance of a foreign spy who was acting as waiter in the hotel. He was so well informed on higher politics, as well as on military matters, that I guessed he must

be an officer of the intelligence staff, and he was most helpful and kind to me in my predicament.

He pointed out to me who were the detectives in the hotel staff, and informed me that their duty was merely to watch me, to ascertain what my moves were day by day, and to report them by telephone to the head police office. He advised me before going out each day to inform the hall porter, thereby letting the detectives overhear what were my plans; they would then telephone to the police, who would have their own detectives watching me while I was out.

Within a short time my brother rejoined me from the manœuvre area, but by doing so he at once came under observation and under suspicion, and we were practically a pair of prisoners. So much was this the case that a few days later we received a visit at daybreak one morning, from a friend in power, who was also in touch with the police, and he advised us that the best course we could take was to escape from the country while it was possible, he undertaking quietly to make arrangements for us. The idea was that we shoild slip away to a seaport, where we could get on to a British steamer as two of the crew and so pass out of the country.

That was the scheme. But the difficulty was how to play it off. A ship was found whose captain was willing to receive us provided that we could get to him without being observed. With the aid of our friendly waiter, we let the detective at the hotel understand that we were tired of being under suspicion, and that we were boldly going to take the train and leave the country.

At ten o'clock a cab was to come round to take us and our luggage to the station, and if anybody interfered with us—why, we were freeborn British, and subject to no man's rule, and the Ambassador and all the rest of the Powers should hear about it! This was for the information of the detective, and he merely telephoned it to the police office at the railway station, where we should be arrested at the point of our departure.

We got into our cab and drove off down the street towards the station until we were out of sight of the hotel. Then we called to our driver and said we should like to go to a different station. This course involved our going to the riverside and taking the ferry.

It was an anxious time. Had we been spotted? Should we be missed? Were we being followed?

These questions would answer themselves as we progressed with our plot. The answer, when it came, would

mean a tremendous lot to us—triumph or five years' imprisonment; so we had every right to be fairly anxious. And yet, somehow, I don't think we were worrying much about the consequences, but rather were busy with the present—as to how to evade pursuit and recapture.

Arrived at the ferry we paid off our cabman and made our way to the quayside. Here we found a boat which had already been arranged for; and we made our way safely off to the ship, which was waiting under steam in midstream to start the moment we were on board.

At this supreme moment my brother had the temerity to argue with the boatman over the fare. Being now in the last stage of tenterhooks, I adjured him to give the man double what he asked, if only to be free. But the brother was calm, and for once—he was right! His display of want of all anxiety quite diverted any kind of suspicion that might have attached to us, and in the end we got safely on board and away.

Such are some of the minor experiences which, though not very sensational in themselves, are yet part of the everyday work of an intelligence agent (*alias* a spy), and while they tend to relieve such work of any suspicion of monotony, they add, as a rule, that touch of romance and excitement to it which makes spying the fascinating sport that it is.

When one recognises also that it may have invaluable results for one's country in time of war, one feels that even though it is a time spent largely in enjoyment, it is not by any means time thrown idly away; and though the agent, if caught, may go under, unhonoured and unsung, he knows in his heart of hearts that he has done as bravely for his country as his comrade who falls in battle.

WAR ADVENTURES OF A SECRET AGENT

By
HECTOR C. BYWATER

FRIENDS and enemies alike have borne testimony to the marvellous efficiency of the British Naval Intelligence Service during the war. It was undoubtedly the most perfect organisation of its kind the world has ever seen, and the part it played in defeating our enemies is now a matter of history.

Viewed in the light of recent disclosures its methods have lost something of the glamour of mystery which formerly surrounded them. It is known, for example, that German code messages intercepted by our directional wireless stations enabled the Intelligence Division to forecast German naval movements with a precision which, to those not in the secret, seemed positively uncanny. Thanks to their indiscreet use of wireless when at sea the German submarines themselves kept us fairly well informed of their doings, and the task of our I.D. experts was further simplified by the German Admiralty's habit of continuing to employ signal codes long after these had been deciphered by our cryptographers.

On the other hand, it would be quite wrong to suppose that all the successes of Naval Intelligence work in war-time were achieved by mechanical means. All through the war we urgently wanted information about many naval matters on which the German wireless remained silent. Neumünster, the German naval wireless headquarters, could be garrulous enough when a projected sortie by the High Seas Fleet, the sailing of a disguised raider, or the start of a secret minelaying expedition was in question, but it had nothing to say about the progress of German naval building, the repair work in hand at the German dockyards, or the morale of the personnel in the High Seas Fleet. Information of this kind could be gathered only on the spot, yet there was no lack of it at any period of the war.

An old-world Kentish garden seems an incongruous setting for a recital of Secret Service experiences in war-time Germany, but it was there that I heard the story that follows.

"You know (said my companion) that I had dabbled in

Intelligence work for our people from 1910 onwards, and what my qualifications were. Towards the end of July, 1914, I was in Munich. It was already pretty clear that trouble was brewing, and I had arranged to leave for Italy on the 28th. On the evening of the 26th, when I was packing, a visitor was announced, and to my intense surprise C—— walked in. He was quite the last person I expected to see. We had met only two months previously in his office near Whitehall, where I had imagined him to be at that moment.

"He said we should be at war with Germany inside a week, and then asked me whether I was prepared to remain in the country and undertake Intelligence work. At first I refused point-blank. Not only were the risks appalling, but I could not see how it would be feasible to get information through to England. But C—— talked me over. By remaining where I was, he said, I should be performing the greatest possible service to my country. It was absolutely vital that our people should be kept advised of German naval plans and movements. Moreover, if I could supply the necessary information I need not worry as to how it was to be passed on; that would be arranged.

"As for remuneration, I should have no reason to complain, and the prospect of a commission was held out as a special inducement. My private opinion was that in a month or two I should have ceased to be interested in such matters, and, indeed, in mundane affairs at all. C—— suggested various methods for concealing my identity. Eventually we decided that I should be an electrical fitter, hailing from Munich. I had a sound knowledge of electrical engineering, could handle tools quite well, and my German was said to be very good indeed. Once I was in Prussia any slight solecisms of speech would be set down to my Bavarian origin.

"C—— promised to let me have a complete set of identity papers and employment references within four days. Although he did not tell me, I discovered later that these were obtained in Zurich, where a couple of enterprising Swiss specialised in the fabrication of passports, etc. For years they had done a brisk business among Russian refugees and other political exiles; but their golden opportunity came with the war, and they took full advantage of it. In 1917 one of the pair retired with a fortune of £150,000. His partner stayed in the business, and for all I know may be in it still. They had their own code of ethics, and boasted that they had never supplied spurious papers to any fugitive criminal. Quite possibly, however, their definition of 'crime' was somewhat elastic. As for their workmanship, I can only say that the papers I had

from them would, and more than once did, deceive the keenest-eyed passport official.

"The immediate problem before me was how to lie low for the succeeding four days. With Germany obviously on the verge of war and the first symptoms of virulent spy fever making themselves evident, it would not do for an Englishman to be walking about openly; yet without the necessary papers it would be dangerous to pose as a German. After much cogitation I decided to effect a temporary disappearance. It was arranged that I should meet C——'s messenger with the forged papers at a café in Pasing, on the outskirts of Munich. He was to be there punctually at noon on July 30th, and a simple method of mutual recognition was arranged. This person, C—— assured me, was entirely trustworthy.

"I was given an address in Hamburg to which I could send reports until such time as other instructions reached me. All messages were to be written in a code which was given to me there and then. It was simple but very ingenious, being based on one of the trade catalogues of a great engineering firm, and, I should say, absolutely unreadable without the key. C—— also handed me £300 in German notes. Additional funds were to be placed at my disposal by an agent who would make contact with me later on. I had better say at once that the arrangements for transmitting news to England and keeping our Secret Service men in Germany supplied with instructions and cash worked faultlessly all the time I was there. How it was done I need not disclose, but the staff work was perfect. The man who organised it all is now a senior partner in one of the big accountant firms in the City.

"C—— and I now parted. He was overjoyed at my acceptance of the mission, and talked a great deal about my courage and patriotism. But I had, nevertheless, a feeling that, paradoxical as it may sound, I had sunk in his estimation by agreeing to act as a spy. Possibly I was doing him an injustice. He had come all the way to Munich to enlist me in this service; he had found me intensely reluctant to engage in it, and it had taken him a long time to break down my resistance. In the end I had allowed myself to be persuaded mainly because of his positive assurance that in no other capacity could I serve England so usefully.

"And yet, as I say, as soon as I had agreed to take up the work I thought I sensed a subtle and unflattering change in his attitude towards me. If this were so it is but another instance of our illogical mentality, for I happened to know that a year or two previously C—— himself had toured the German naval ports in quest of information. In any case, I

did not take his change of manner to heart. A man is the keeper of his own conscience, and I had satisfied myself that the work before me represented my plain duty. I have only mentioned the matter because you will find that almost everybody who has done Intelligence work 'at the front'—that is to say, not merely from an office in Whitehall—has experienced the same silent disapprobation even from those who were foremost in urging them to undertake it as a patriotic duty.

"Anyway, C—— and I parted amicably enough, not to meet again until after the war. Returning to my apartment I repacked my things. I kept only a small, shabby valise; all my other belongings went into two trunks which I forwarded to a friend in Milan. Next I purchased a complete outfit suitable for a German artisan of the better class. To be on the safe side I went to the police station to report myself as departing for Italy. In view of the tense political situation I suspected that the police would already be keeping a sharper eye on foreign residents.

"That afternoon, wearing my new clothes, I left Munich for Regensburg. I put up for the night at a humble inn, and in the morning bought a bicycle. The next three days I spent cycling back to Munich by a roundabout route, which led me through Inglostadt and Augsburg. A workman on a bicycle was the last object to arouse suspicion, and although the mobilisation order was now expected at any moment I was never once challenged nor asked to show my papers.

"I reached Munich in the forenoon of the 30th, and, giving the locality where I had lived a wide berth, made my way to Pasing. As soon as I entered the café I saw C——'s messenger. Having made the agreed signal, to which he responded, I drank some beer and then strolled out. The other man followed me, and when I turned down a quiet street he came up to me and handed over the papers. Then, with a sotto voce 'Good luck!' in English, he left me. To this day I have no idea who he was.

"C—— had advised me to make for one of the North Sea ports, either Hamburg or Bremen. Eventually I was to do my utmost to obtain employment in Wilhelmshaven itself, the chief war base of the High Seas Fleet, and therefore the best centre for picking up naval information; but we both recognised that to proceed there at once might be indiscreet. Meanwhile I needed a little time in which to rehearse my new part. With the bogus papers I had received there was quite a lengthy dossier, detailing my 'personal history' almost from infancy down to the past week. It was either a master-

piece of informed imagination or else, as I suspect was the case, the life-story of some actual German who had probably died quite recently. Anyway, it was a perfect 'cover,' and after studying it for a time I begun to feel more confident of my ability to escape detection.

"But I will not disguise from you that at this date, and indeed for weeks afterwards, I lived in a constant state of terror. I slept badly, suffered from chronic nightmares of the most ghastly description, and expected to be denounced every time a stranger glanced in my direction. Worst of all, I had periods of virtual amnesia—mercifully but short—in which I could not remember a word of German. By the grace of God these never occurred at critical moments. Gradually the nervous tension relaxed; I settled down to the work, and countered my dread of the firing squad by carrying several doses of poison concealed in various parts of my person. When emergencies did arise I was equal to them. Long-continued immunity gave me confidence, but I can truthfully say that to the very end I observed every precaution and never made a slip through carelessness.

"*Upon reflection I decided to travel part of the distance* to the north on my faithful bicycle. It was an inconspicuous way to move about and it insured me ample solitude in which to accustom myself to my new personality. So I set off that same evening (July 30th) and rode by easy stages through Inglostadt, Nuremberg, and Würzburg to Frankfort-on-Main. It took me the best part of a week, and long before I reached Frankfort the war was in full blast. Things had now become dangerous, for at any moment a policeman might stop me and ask why I, an able-bodied man, had not been called to the colours. What I needed was some endorsement on my papers exempting me from military service. Such exemptions, I had heard, were being given to skilled workmen, but I had no idea how to proceed in the matter. Obviously, therefore, I must get to Hamburg without further delay and find C——'s agent.

"So at Frankfort I forsook my bicycle and took train for the north. It was a tedious journey, for we were continually being held up by military trains carrying troops, guns, etc. One could not help secretly admiring the smoothness with which the whole business worked. I had always known that we should be up against it in the event of trouble with Germany, but it was awe-inspiring to watch with one's own eyes the cold, relentless precision with which this gigantic war machine was getting into its stride.

"I reached Hamburg on August 7th—three days after

the British declaration of war, and went straight to the address G—— had given me. As I walked upstairs and knocked at the door my heart was in my mouth. I knew nothing of this man to whom I was going to reveal my secret. He might have double-crossed us, or, what was just as likely, he himself might be in the hands of the police, who perhaps were waiting for me behind the door. But my fears were groundless. Half an hour later I left the house with an official certificate exempting me from military service for three months, and bearing in my head simple instructions relating to the transmission of my reports.

" This Hamburg agent was a marvel. I never discovered his identity, but I believe he was the English son of a German mother. Nothing could upset his composure. On one occasion—to anticipate matters a little—he and I were sitting in a café in Kiel. It was in the second year of the war. I had reason to believe that I was under suspicion, and G—— himself told me that his Hamburg office had recently been searched in his absence. At any moment, therefore, we might have been arrested, and that would have meant death.

" Sitting in that café I had to summon up all my will-power to preserve a calm exterior. At a table nearby was an individual in whom I thought I recognised a detective. All round us were officers of the army and navy, with their ladies. I told G—— of the detective's presence. He never turned a hair, but went on discussing the latest war news with so much animation that some of our neighbours glanced in our direction. Then, to my horror, he began a mild altercation with the waiter about the bottle of wine we had ordered. We had thus become conspicuous, and I was cursing G——'s folly under my breath.

"Just then a rear-admiral entered the room, with two other officers. They were passing near our table when G—— started up and, brushing the waiter aside, walked towards the flag-officer with outstretched hand, exclaiming, 'Ach, Herr Admiral, what a pleasure to see you again!' The officer smiled genially and shook hands with G——, who accompanied the party to their table and remained with them for some minutes in lively conversation. When he returned to me he had precisely the air of smug satisfaction which a German civilian would display after being accorded the honour of hobnobbing with an officer of high rank. By this time I was past surprise, but I could not help noticing that the detective had vanished. No doubt he had concluded that persons who were friendly with admirals must be beyond suspicion.

"It would make too long a story to tell you of my work in detail. Two days after meeting G—— I was taken on at the Vulkan Yard in Hamburg as an 'Elektrotechniker' and worked for twelve months in various ships they were building, from battleships to destroyers. I was frequently sent to Wilhelmshaven on urgent repairs, and once as far as Danzig to do some wiring in a cruiser which had stopped a Russian shell. All sorts of information came my way, and I wrote scores of reports, all of which went to G—— in Hamburg. Finally, in November, 1915, I became an employé in the dockyard at Wilhelmshaven, and remained there for two and a half years.

"It was there that I saw the ships come in after the Battle of Jutland, and a week later I had sent G—— a full and accurate report of the damage received by practically every ship in the yard. Since the war I have often laughed over the fantastic legends spread by German historians. The predominant feeling in the German Fleet after Jutland was one of profound surprise and relief that they had escaped annihilation. Moreover, they had suffered very heavily, for while the strong construction of the ships had kept most of them afloat it had not saved the crews from the effects of cordite fires and shell splinters.

"For more than a week after the battle corpses and mangled human remains were being taken out of turrets and lower compartments. In the *Seydlitz* alone it took a fortnight to recover all the dead, many of whom had been trapped in the forward part of the ship when the bulkheads gave way.* They could not be reached until the holes in the bow had been patched up and the compartments pumped dry. Over a thousand funerals took place in the first week after the battle, and the flamboyant official communiqués claiming a great victory were in strange contrast to the atmosphere of funereal gloom that hung over Kiel and Rüstringen.

"At Christmas, 1917, I had several days' leave and went to Hamburg to meet G—— For the first time he broke his rule and introduced me to two other agents, one of whom was an obvious German. It came out at the conference that the latter, whom we called Carl, had worked out a scheme for causing an explosion at Dietrichsdorf, the depôt near Kiel where most of the navy's ammunition was stored. Carl produced a plan of the place, which was situated in fairly open country and covered about 150 acres. He showed us three buildings which he said contained five thousand tons of nitro-

* During the battle the *Seydlitz* was heavily damaged forward by gunfire and torpedo. She returned to port with her lofty forecastle under water.

cellulose powder. They were separated by lofty embankments, but the theory was that if one building went up the tremendous concussion would touch off the others.

"Carl had established relations with a man who was suffering under a grievance, and who had revealed an easy method of getting into the depôt at night. It was heavily guarded, and a sentry or two would have to be silenced before anything could be done. Briefly, the plan was for Carl and another of us to make our way into the depôt just after midnight, when the shifts were being relieved, and deposit bombs with time-fuses in the two main powder stores. If a sentry appeared he was to be knocked on the head. As the raiders were to be dressed in the canvas overalls and list slippers which were worn by all the staff they would probably be mistaken for employees, and therefore should have no difficulty in approaching a sentry near enough to deliver a knock-out blow with a small but deadly type of bludgeon which Carl exhibited.

"We discussed the plan for hours at a time. It seemed feasible enough, and Carl was supremely confident of success. In the end G—— decided that I was too precious to be risked, and the other man, whom he called Richard and who appeared to be English, was told off as Carl's confederate. Months later I heard what had happened. Carl and Richard went to Kiel, where they spent two or three weeks surveying the country round Dietrichsdorf and talking over details with the man who had a grievance. The night they fixed for the enterprise was moonless. They slipped out of Kiel and walked to Dietrichsdorf by a devious route, reaching the wire barrier a quarter of an hour before midnight.

"They got through without much difficulty, and then made their way towards the first of the big powder sheds. Carl actually got inside, and was just about to deposit his bomb when he saw hundreds of big projectiles stacked in rows. It was a shell store, not a powder magazine. They had evidently mistaken their way in the darkness.

"What followed is of psychological interest. Had Carl been English he would have planted his bomb in the room and hoped for the best; but, being German, he argued to himself that since the effects of the bomb detonation on the shells was problematical, he was not justified in leaving his infernal machine there. He was obsessed with thoughts about kinetic energy and the sensitivity of T.N.T. as compared with nitro-cellulose, and not seeing the wood for the trees missed a wonderful opportunity. As a matter of fact, had he placed his bomb (which contained 20 lb. of amatol)

on top of the nearest row of projectiles there is not the slightest doubt that it would have touched off everything in the building.

"As it was he stole outside to where Richard was waiting, and they risked switching on their torch for a second to consult the map of the place and get their bearings. But the light betrayed them. A sentry challenged, and not satisfied with Carl's reply came forward to investigate. The latter aimed a blow at him, but the bludgeon missed his head and he lunged forward with the bayonet, which pierced Carl's coat. As the two men ran off the sentry fired three rounds rapid. Richard stumbled and fell, but was up again in an instant, running with undiminished speed. But not for long. Suddenly he stopped dead, slowly sank to his knees, and said to Carl, 'I'm done; got one through the back; no good staying; you bolt.' Then he had a bad hæmorrhage, rolled over on his side and lay still.

"Carl saw that nothing could be done, so he continued his flight. By now the whole place was alarmed. A searchlight mounted on a tower was methodically quartering the ground, but Carl dodged the beam by crouching under an embankment. Then, as it moved away, he took to his heels again and soon reached the wire. He was several minutes finding the way out, but discovered it at last and got away unseen. All that night and for most of the next day he lay in hiding, for patrols were searching the countryside. When at length he got back to Kiel he found the city buzzing with excitement at the news of the raid.

"Richard's body had been found, but as there was absolutely nothing by which it could be identified the corpse was buried as that of an unknown spy. After this attempt the guards at the ammunition depôt were doubled and the whole premises girdled with live electric wires. The bombs which had been left on the ground were found to be military demolition charges. Carl was very downcast at the failure of the raid. When he told the story to G—— the latter rated him soundly for not having left a bomb in the shell store, but he still argued that it would not have produced a big explosion.

"Although a man of immense courage he was apt to be stupid at times. Subsequently, I believe, he was concerned in the destruction of the Alhorn Zeppelin base, for which piece of work he was richly rewarded. I have no idea why he turned traitor to his country, but he did not strike me as the sort of man who would do so purely from motives of greed.

"In May, 1918, my health broke down. The strain had become too much for me. I was given sick leave from the dockyard and sent to a convalescent home near Oldenburg, where most of the patients were munition workers. Here my nerves threatened to give way entirely; my constant dread was that I might talk in my sleep, and even a word or two muttered in English would give me away. At last I could stand it no longer, and did a very foolish thing. One day I walked out of the home without speaking to anybody, went to Oldenburg and took train to Hamburg. There I went straight to G—— and begged him, for God's sake, to get me out of the country. He must have seen I was at the end of my tether, for instead of pitching into me for deserting my post he was kindness itself.

"But he did warn me that I had placed both of us in extreme danger. It was possible, of course, that my flight from the convalescent home might be attributed to shell-shock, in which case there would be no pursuit. But G—— judged it best to take no risks. He found me a room in an obscure part of the city and forbade me to stir out of it until I got the word. Then one evening, a week later, he came for me and took me to a waterside tavern, where we met the skipper of a Swedish steamer which had brought a cargo of iron ore from Gothenburg. I was introduced as a German deserter, who was anxious to leave the country till the war was over.

"After much haggling the skipper agreed to take me on board as a 'stowaway' for two thousand marks (£100). After all, he was not running any grave risk, for if I were discovered he could disavow all knowledge of me, and I had solemnly sworn not to disclose his complicity. So I was packed away in the hold, and next day the steamer proceeded down the river to Brunsbüttel. Thence she passed through the Kaiser Wilhelm canal and so into the Baltic. When we were well out at sea I allowed myself to be 'discovered.' In the hearing of his men the captain threatened to hand me over to the police when he got to port. But by this time I was exceedingly ill, and looked it, and the kindhearted Swedish sailors advised me not to worry, as the captain's bark was worse than his bite. I, of course, knew I had nothing to fear.

"There was no difficulty in getting ashore at Gothenburg. I rested there a few days and then travelled to Stockholm, where I made myself known to the British authorities and got into touch with headquarters at home. There was some talk of my returning to Germany after taking a long holiday to recuperate, but I had had enough. In due course I arrived

in England, and had no reason to complain of my reception. They were exceedingly pleased with my work, as well they might be. I was able to supply them with the latest information as to the High Seas Fleet and the state of affairs at Wilhelmshaven generally. Even before I had left there were obvious signs of disintegration among the German crews, and still more among the dockyard staff, which included a number of avowed Communists.

"So far as I can judge I was never seriously suspected. There were several awkward moments during my thirty months at Wilhelmshaven, but luck or presence of mind, or both together, brought me through safely. I saw everybody of any note in the German naval world, from the Kaiser and von Tirpitz downward, and once did some repairs to the electrical fittings of Admiral Scheer's day cabin on board the fleet flagship, *Friedrich der Grosse*.

"My impression is that the High Seas Fleet was at its best during the summer of 1916—that is, after Jutland. It had been badly hammered in that battle, it is true, but the result had given the men confidence in their ships, and they were quite willing to risk another fight. But when the fleet went out again in August, only to scuttle back to port for no apparent reason, the men got it into their heads that the naval staff had vetoed another big action. Thereafter the fighting spirit of the men began to decline, and the mutinies at Wilhelmshaven and Kiel in July, 1917—which were much more serious than was known in England—paved the way for the final débâcle in October of the following year."

THE PRINCE'S DOUBLE

By

CAPT. HORST VON DER GOLTZ

GROSS LICHTERFELDE! As I write, it all comes back to me clearly, in spite of the full years that have passed—this, my first home in Berlin. A huge pile of buildings set in a suburb of the city, grim and military in appearance; and in fact, as I soon discovered.

I was to become a cadet, it seems; and where in Germany could one receive better training than in this same Gross Lichterfelde?

At home I had had some small experience with the exactions of the gymnasium; but now I found that this was but so much child's play in comparison to the life at Gross Lichterfelde. We were drilled and dragooned from morning till night: mathematics, history, the languages—they were not taught us, they were literally pounded into us. And the military training! I am not unfamiliar with the curricula of Sandhurst, of St. Cyr, even of West Point, but I honestly believe that the training we had to undergo was fully as arduous and as technical as at any of those schools. And we were only boys.

Military strategy and tactics; sanitation; engineering; chemistry; in fact, any and every study that could conceivably be of use to these future officers of the German Army; to all of these must we apply ourselves with the utmost diligence. And woe to the student who shirked!

Then there was the endless drilling, that left us with sore muscles and minds so worn with the monotony of it that we turned even to our studies with relief. And the supervision! Our very play was regulated.

Can you wonder that we hated it and likened the cadet school to a prison? And can you imagine how galling it was to me, who had come to Berlin seeking romance and found drudgery?

But we learned. Oh, yes. The war has shown how well we learned.

There was one relief from the constant study which was highly prized by all the cadets at Gross Lichterfelde. It was the custom to select from our school a number of youths to act as pages at the Imperial court; and lucky were the ones

who were detailed to this service. It meant a vacation at the very least, to say nothing of a change from the Spartan fare of the cadet school.

I must have been a student for a full three months before my turn came ; long enough, at any rate, for me to receive the news of my selection with the utmost delight. But I had not been on service at the Imperial Palace for more than a few days when a state dinner was given in honour of a guest at court. He was a young prince of a certain grand-ducal house, which by blood was half Russian and half German. I recall the appearance of myself and the other pages, as we were dressed for the function. Ordinarily we wore a simple undress cadet uniform, but that evening a striking costume was provided : nothing less than a replica of the garb of a medieval herald—tabard and all—for Wilhelm II. had a flair for the feudal. From my belt hung a capacious pouch, which, pages of longer standing than I assured me, was the most important part of my equipment ; since by custom the ladies were expected to keep these pouches comfortably filled with sweetmeats. Candy for a cadet ! No wonder every boy welcomed his turn at page duty, and went back reluctantly to the asceticism of Gross Lichterfelde.

That was my first sight of an Imperial dinner. The great banquet hall that overlooks the square on the Ufer was ablaze with lights. The guests—the men in their uniforms even more than the women—made a brilliant spectacle to the eyes of a youngster from the provinces ; but most brilliant of all was Wilhelm II., resplendent in the full dress uniform of a field-marshal. I can recall him as he sat there, lordly, arrogant, yet friendly, but never seeming to forget the monarch in the host. It seemed to me that he loved to disconcert a guest with his remarks ; it delighted him to set the table laughing at some one else's expense.

By chance, during the banquet, it fell to me to render service to the young prince. Once, as I moved behind his chair, a German Princess exclaimed, " Oh, doesn't the page resemble his Highness ? "

The Kaiser looked at me sharply.

" Yes," he agreed, " they might well be twins." Then, impulsively lifting up his glass, he flourished it towards the Russo-German prince and drank to him.

That was all there was to the incident—then. I returned to Gross Lichterfelde the next morning, and proceeded to think no more of the matter. Nor did it come to my mind when a few weeks later I was suddenly summoned to Berlin, and driven, with one of my instructors, to a private house in

a street I did not know. (It was the Wilhelmstrasse, and the residence stood next to Number 75, the Foreign Office. It was the house Berlin speaks of as Samuel Meyer's *Bude*—in other words, the private offices of the Chancellor and His Imperial Majesty.)

We entered a room, bare save for a desk or two and a portrait of Wilhelm I., where my escort surrendered me to an official, who silently surveyed me, comparing his observations with a paper he held, which apparently contained my personal measurements. Later a photograph was taken of me, and then I was bidden to wait. I waited for several hours, it seemed to me, before a second official appeared—a large, round-faced man, soldierly despite his stoutness—who greeted my escort politely and, taking a photograph from his pocket, proceeded to scrutinize me carefully. After a moment he turned to my escort.

"Has he any identifying marks on his body?" he asked.

My escort assured him that there were none.

"Good!" he exclaimed; and a moment later we were driving back towards Gross Lichterfelde—I, quite at sea about the whole affair, but not daring to ask questions about it. Idle curiosity was not encouraged among cadets.

I was not to remain in ignorance for long, however. A few days later I was ordered to pack my clothing, and with it was transferred to a quiet hotel on the Dorotheen Strasse. The hotel was not far from the War Academy, and there I was placed under the charge of an exasperatingly puttering tutor, who strove to perfect me on but three points. He insisted that my French be impeccable; he made me study the private and detailed history of a certain Russian house; and he was most particular about the way I walked and ate, about my knowledge of Russian ceremonies and customs—in a word, about my deportment in general.

The weeks passed. At last, by dint of much hard work, I became sufficiently expert in my studies to satisfy my tutor. I was taken back to the house on the Wilhelmstrasse, where the round-faced man again inspected me. He talked with me at length in French, made me walk before him and asked me innumerable questions about the family history of the house I had been studying. Finally he drew a photograph from his pocket—the same, I fancy, which had figured in our previous interview.

"Do you recognise this face?" he inquired, offering me the picture.

I started. It might have been my own likeness. But no! That uniform was never mine. Then in a moment I realised

the truth and with the realisation the whole mystery of the last few weeks began to be clear to me. The photograph was a portrait of the young Prince Z—— ; my double, whom I had served at the banquet.

" It is a very remarkable likeness," said the round-faced man. " And it will be of good service to the Fatherland."

He eyed me for a moment impressively before continuing.

" You are to go to Russia," he told me. " Prince Z—— has been invited to visit his family at St. Petersburg, and he has accepted the invitation. But unfortunately Prince Z—— has discovered that he cannot go. You will therefore become the Prince—for the time being. You will visit your family, note everything that is said to you and report to your tutor, Herr ——, who will accompany you and give you further instructions.

" This is an important mission," he added solemnly, " but I have no doubt that you will comport yourself satisfactorily. You have been taught everything that is necessary ; and you have already shown yourself a young man of spirit and some discretion. We rely upon both of these qualities." He bowed in dismissal of us, but as we turned to go he spoke again.

" Remember," he was saying. " From this day you are no longer a cadet. You are a prince. Act accordingly."

That was all. We were out of the door and half-way to our hotel before I realised to the full the great adventure I had embarked upon. Embarked ? Shanghaied would be the better term. I had had no choice in the matter, whatsoever. I had not even uttered a word during the interview.

At any rate, that night I left for Petrograd—still St. Petersburg at that time—accompanied by my tutor and two newly engaged valets, who did not know the real Prince. Of what was ahead I had no idea, but as my tutor had no doubts of the success of our mission, I wasted little time in speculating upon the future.

What the real Prince's motive was in agreeing to the masquerade, and where he spent his time while I was in Russia, I have never been able to discover. From what followed, I surmise that he was strongly pro-German in his sympathies but distrusted his ability to carry through the task in hand.

In St. Petersburg I discovered that my " relatives "—whom I had known to be very exalted personages—were inclined to be more than hospitable to this young kinsman whom they had not seen for a long time. I found myself petted and spoiled to a delightful degree ; indeed I had a

truly princely time. The only drawback was that, as the constant admonitions of my tutor reminded me, I could spend my princely wealth only in such ways as my—shall I say, predecessor?—would have done. He, alas, was apparently a graver youth than I.

So two weeks passed, while I was beginning to wish that the masquerade would continue indefinitely, when one day my tutor sent for me.

"So," he said, "We have had play enough, not so? Now we shall have work."

In a few words he explained the situation to me. Russia, it seemed, was about to enter into an agreement with England, regarding what appeared to be practically a partitioning of Persia. Already a certain Baron B—— (let me call him) was preparing to leave St. Petersburg with instructions to find out under what circumstances the British Government would enter into pourparlers on the subject. Berlin, whose interests in the Near East would be menaced by such an agreement, needed information—and delay. I was to secure both. It was the old trick of using a little instrument to clog the mechanism of a great machine.

My Government had learned of the impending pourparlers between Britain and Russia; it knew that Baron B——'s instructions would contain the conditions which Russia considered desirable. What was necessary was to secure these instructions.

Now, my tutor had, long before this, seen to it that I should be on friendly terms with various members of the baron's household; and he had been especially insistent that I pay a good deal of attention to the young daughter of the house, whom I shall call Nevshka. I had wondered at the time why he should do this; but I obeyed his instructions with alacrity. Nevshka was charming.

Now I saw the purpose of this carefully fostered friendship.

"The baron will spend this evening at the club," I was informed. "He will return, according to his habit, promptly at twelve. You will visit his house this evening, paying a call upon Nevshka. You will contrive to set back the clock so that his homecoming will be in the nature of a surprise to her. The hour will be so late that she, knowing her father's strictness, will contrive to get you out of the house without his seeing you. That is your opportunity! You must slip from the salon into the rear hall—but do not leave the house. And if, young man, with such an opportunity, you cannot discover where these papers are hidden *and secure them*, you

"Come!" she exclaimed. "Father must not see you. He would be furious at your being here at this hour." In a panic she glanced about the salon. "Go out that way."

are unworthy of the trust that your government has placed in you."

I nodded my comprehension. In other words I was to take advantage of Nevshka's friendship in order to steal from her father—I was to perform an act from which no gentleman could help shrinking. And I was going to do it with no more qualms of conscience than, in time of war, I should have felt about stealing from an enemy general the plan of an attack.

For countries are always at war—diplomatically. There is always a conflict between the foreign ambitions of governments ; always an attempt on the part of each country to gain its own ends by fair means or foul. Every man engaged in diplomatic work knows this to be true. And he will serve his government without scruple, for well he knows that some seemingly dishonourable act of his may be the means of averting that actual warfare which is only the forlorn hope that governments resort to when diplomatic means of mastery have failed.

So I undertook my mission with no hesitation, rather with a thrill of eagerness. I pretended to be violently interested in Nevshka (no difficult task, that) and time sped by so merrily that even had I not turned back the hands of the clock, I doubt if the lateness of the hour would have seriously concerned either of us. Oh, yes, my tutor—who, as you of course have guessed by now, was no mere tutor—had analysed the situation correctly.

As the baron was heard at the door, I drew out my watch.

"Nevshka, your clock is slow. It is already midnight."

Nevshka started.

"Come !" she exclaimed. "Father must not see you. He would be furious at your being here at this hour." In a panic she glanced about the salon. "Go out that way." And she pointed to a door at the rear, one that opened on a dimly-lit hallway.

I went. I heard the baron express his surprise that Nevshka was still awake. I heard her lie—beautifully, I assure you. And I remained hidden while the baron worked in his library for a while ; hardly daring to breathe until I heard him go up the stairs to his bedroom.

He was a careless man, the baron. Or perhaps he had been reading Poe, and believed that the most obvious place of concealment was the safest. At any rate, there in a drawer of his desk, protected only by the most defenceless of locks, were the papers—a neat statement of the terms upon which Russia would discuss this Persian matter with England.

I returned home with my prize, to find my tutor awaiting

me. He said no word of commendation when I gave him the papers, but I knew by his expression that he was well pleased with my work. And I went to bed, delighted with myself, and dreaming of the great things that were to come.

The next day we left St. Petersburg. A German resident of the city had telephoned my relatives, warning them that a few cases of cholera had appeared. Would it not, he suggested (Oh, it was mere kind thoughtfulness on his part) be best to let the young prince return to Germany until the danger was over? His parents would be worried. Indeed, it would be best, my "relatives" agreed. So with regret they bade leave of me; and in the most natural manner in the world I returned to Berlin.

Wilhelmstrasse 76 again! The round-faced man again, but this time less military, less unbending, in his manner. I had done well, he told me. My exploit had attracted the favourable attention of a very exalted personage. If I could hold my tongue—who knows what might be in store for me?

I was sent back to Gross Lichterfelde, where I abruptly ceased to be a young prince, and became once more a humble cadet. But only to outside eyes. Dazzled by the success of my first mission, I regarded myself as a superman among the cadets. Life loomed romantically before me. I told myself that I was to consort with princes and beautiful noblewomen and to spend money lavishly. The future seemed to promise a career that was the merriest, maddest, for which a man could hope.

I laugh sometimes now when I think of the dreams I had in those days. I was soon to learn that the life which fate had thrust upon me was set with traps and pitfalls which might not easily be escaped. I was to learn many lessons and to know much suffering; and I was to discover that the finding of my "document" was only the beginning of a chain of events that were to control my whole life—and that its influence over my career had not ended.

But at that time I was all hopes and rosy dreams—of my future, of myself, occasionally of Nevshka.

Nevshka. Is she still as charming as ever?

THE DRAMA OF THE MISSING SPY

By

BARONESS CARLA JENSSEN

IT HAPPENS very often in Secret Service work that an agent has no course but to play a game of patience, so to speak, making no attempt to bring matters to a head, but simply waiting for the other side to make the first overtures. And this is apt to be nerve-racking work as well as monotonous, for the simple reason that a voluntary step towards confidential relations on the part of the enemy may very well mean a deliberate trap.

A case which fell very definitely into this class—a case, that is to say, in which we had to wait for the first move to come from the other side—was that which centred round the mysterious disappearance of Wing-Commander Peter ——

I had seen scarcely anything of my chief Major X—— since my discharge from hospital following an adventure in Ostend, and I believe he actually was abroad for a good deal of his time. I was surprised, therefore, to get a telephone call from him one afternoon, asking me to come round immediately to see him. I found him pacing up and down his room and sucking furiously at his pipe, worry written in every line of his face.

" I want you to go to Madrid," he began without preamble, " and see if you can find out what's happened to Peter ——"

The man he mentioned, besides being one of the most distinguished flying-officers in the British Army, was also one of the astutest and most successful Intelligence agents we possessed. I knew him personally and admired him immensely.

" You think he has met with foul play ? " I could not help asking.

X—— gave a little shrug of the shoulders.

" I can't help fearing so," he answered sombrely. " It was a pretty dangerous mission ; but it was also a highly urgent one, and he was the last man in the world to leave his Department without news if it was in his power to send word."

It *is* my belief that X—— took me in on this business for a reason beyond that which he had given me : namely, because

he well knew that Peter —— and I were close friends and that I would move heaven and earth to find him.

Before I started on my expedition X—— sent for me to place a new development in my hands.

"I said I thought you would find yourself up against men," he said, "but I find that your key is a woman after all. She is a beautiful Spaniard who dines in the Ritz Hotel at Madrid every night, always alone and always at the same table. Peter —— was seen about with her two or three times, we hear. . . . Well, all the better that you're going; it takes a woman to read a woman." And he added: "I'm not going to worry you with any instructions. In this case you will be working all alone and entirely on your own initiative."

When I entered the dining-room of the Ritz I had no difficulty whatever in identifying my "key," for she was unique even in a room graced by a considerable number of conspicuously beautiful women. How shall I describe her? She gave a general effect of tallness and slenderness, partly due, possibly, to a smallish bust and narrow waist, since her hips were on the broad side. Her hair was black, but infused with that deep blue sheen one sees on the plumage of certain birds or in the coat of a black leopard; coiled on the nape of a neck as white as buttermilk, it provided a very startling contrast. Her eyes were lovely: they were large and luminous, brimming with intelligence, and so nearly real black as to invite the hackneyed comparison with sloes. I will not go so far as to say that those eyes were purely voluptuous—they were too intellectual for that—but they derived a strong hint of sensuousness from being perpetually half closed by heavy lids, as the eyes of Spanish women so often are, and the impression was faithfully carried out by a pair of lips bright scarlet against the pallor of her skin. She was magnificently gowned, and her jewels must have been worth a fortune.

I was unable to get a table next to hers; but the place I secured was not very far distant, so I could comfortably observe her. Throughout the meal she never once exhibited the faintest curiosity concerning the other diners, but appeared as though completely preoccupied with her own thoughts. As soon as she had finished she rose and walked into the lounge, where she took coffee. Then she sat on for about an hour, still as *distraite* as ever, and finally got up abruptly and left the hotel.

The following day I spent chiefly in sight-seeing and in looking up two or three people I happened to know in Madrid. When opportunity offered I also tried to do a little

diplomatic " pumping " of the hotel waiters. But it brought me nothing. Oh, yes, of course they knew the beautiful lady to whom I referred—who didn't ? Indeed, nearly everybody who saw her was so struck by her appearance as to wish to know more about her. But all they could say was that she came in here night after night, sat always in the same place and always solitary, then vanished as mysteriously as she arrived. No, they didn't remember ever having even heard her name or where she lived. It is possible, of course, that they really did know as little as they professed ; I am inclined to think, on the other hand, that her tips were on a scale to emphasise the truth that silence is golden. . . .

After a day or two of fruitless inaction, I bethought me of a Spaniard I had once known, living in Madrid now and reputed to be acquainted with every one in the city who was anybody. At my invitation he dined with me one night at the hotel. He recognised the woman immediately, but, to my disappointment, could tell me only a little more about her than I knew already.

" She's a most eccentric woman," he observed. " Rumour puts her down as a man-hater, and I shouldn't wonder if she is."

" But nobody seems ever to see her anywhere except here," I objected.

" Don't you believe it," laughed my companion. " There isn't a day passes but she's to be seen walking about in the streets with a beautiful white Borzoi. And at nights you see her at all sorts of places. She goes to dances quite often. Always alone, though."

" Does she dance ? " I put in.

" Oh, no. Just orders a bit of supper and some champagne, and then sits brooding and watching with those queer eyes of hers. I believe men have asked her to dance occasionally and been pretty badly snubbed for their pains. . . . You see her at cabarets or the opera, too, sometimes."

" Still always alone, I suppose."

" Always—never even with another woman. . . . Oh, she's a riddle, all right. Always reminds me of a tigress, somehow."

One night when she had finished her dinner and was taking her customary coffee in the lounge, I followed her out and took a chair quite close to hers. For a time I sat idly turning over the pages of some journal I had picked up, while she just sipped her coffee and regarded the passing throng from beneath those heavy, white eyelids of hers, immobile as a statue, inscrutable as the sphinx.

Presently I fetched a deep sigh and flung down my paper, as though at the very extremity of *ennui*.

"Please forgive me for intruding on you," I said in Spanish, turning impulsively to the other woman, "but as we are both alone, perhaps you'll excuse it. . . . Would you care to try an English cigarette?"

The things I had heard of her had prepared me for as possible rebuff. Actually no one could have been more gracious than she showed herself.

"You are very kind," she answered in a rich contralto voice, accepting the cigarette. Then she began to speak in English—good English, too. "Yes, it is dreadful being all alone in a strange city. . . . You speak Spanish well, yet you look more English than Spanish."

There was a diplomatic question veiled by the statement.

"My mother was Spanish," I informed her.

"Indeed! So was mine, but my father was a Hungarian."

"You take after her," I said frankly.

"I know; everybody takes me for pure Spanish, especially as I have a Spanish name—my husband's, you understand. My name is Señora Dolores Carlos."

I told her my own.

"And what are you doing in Madrid?" she inquired casually. "Just sightseeing?"

"Yes and no," I answered. "Really I'm waiting for some friends."

"I see. . . . Do you find Madrid as gay as you expected? Sometimes people are disappointed with it after all they have heard."

"Well," I said, "I don't know about that. But of course any foreign city is always a little lonely for a stranger."

"You ought to be able to find plenty of men," my companion replied. On the face of it, the remark was no more than a piece of sly chaff. Yet I was sure I detected a real sneer underlying the words, and decided to make it my cue.

"Men!" I exclaimed contemptuously. "It would have to be a very, very lonely city before I should look for diversion in that direction. There's only one thought at the back of all men's minds, and once they have attained their object——"

I left my sentence unfinished, conveying my meaning by a snap of the fingers. Señora Carlos looked at me with quickened interest, I thought.

"You don't seem to have a very high opinion of men," she ventured.

"I haven't; most of them are just pigs. And besides, they don't interest me."

She nodded sympathetically, regarding me appraisingly with her drowsy, half-closed eyes.

I asked her then whether she would not dine together with me the following night. Perhaps I was a little too precipitate; at all events she refused, very gently and graciously, it is true, but none the less firmly, saying that to dine alone was one of her unalterable foibles. Then she hastened to add, as though to soothe my feelings, that she would gladly take coffee with me afterwards, or go to a cabaret if I preferred.

From then onwards we saw quite a lot of each other, but from first to last she was always the same queer, enigmatical mixture of confidences and reticences. She would admit me, for instance, to all manner of intimate details of her private life. Yet whenever we had been out together she would take great pains to contrive that I should be dropped the first on our way home, and any inquiries about her place of abode drew only evasive replies. One day I mentioned that my Spanish friend had expressed a wish to meet her. As usual, she was very charming about the matter; but I nevertheless understood quite unmistakably that she did not desire to make his acquaintance. And so it went on for days, I never seeming to make a single step forward. I was beginning to wonder seriously whether I might not be following an altogether false scent after all.

One day I thought I would try to catch her napping, hoping thus to decide the question. I had with me a carefully-faked photograph of a house-party group, in which Peter —— had been made to appear among the guests. Steering the conversation round to English society, I told a story or two concerning people who happened to be in the photograph. Then I fished out the group to show her the individuals in question: one of the faces I pointed out was Peter's. I did not dare to steal even a glance at her face as I did so; I was relying on her making some involuntary bodily movement if she recognised him. But she disappointed me; there was not the tiniest reaction.

On the following day I was forcibly reminded—though I needed no reminding—that it was high time something definite happened.

I had come in from a shopping expedition, and was on my way through the lounge, when a man rose and greeted me with every symptom of delighted surprise.

"Who one earth would have expected to run into *you*

here?" he exclaimed heartily. "I thought you were hunting in Leicestershire."

"I was," I said, "but the people I was staying with got illness in the house and the party broke up."

"What putrid luck! . . . I say, are you alone here?"

I told him I was, and suggested we might share a table at dinner, unless he had other arrangements.

"Love to," he said. "I'm at the Savoy, but it's devilish lonely and I'd be glad of a bit of company."

I need hardly say that this conversation was an elaborate piece of play-acting put up for the benefit of any one who might be observing our encounter. The man was Bentley, an agent of X——'s and, incidentally, a close friend of Peter ——

At dinner he told me point-blank that he had been sent over to learn what progress I was making, and listened attentively while I ran over the events of the past few days and outlined the difficulties which confronted me.

"I'm beginning to wonder," I confided to him, "whether there wasn't some mistake made over my 'key.' She behaves for all the world like an ordinary, harmless eccentric. Suppose that's all she is?"

Bentley shook his head.

"I doubt it," he said. "At all events, the Major told me just before I left that he was more certain than ever of her being the right 'key.' You must admit she looks thoroughly dangerous."

"I do admit it," I answered, "but her actions contradict it, and that's what puzzles me so much."

When Señora Dolores Carlos had finished dining she stopped at our table for a moment on her way out. Leaning down close to me and using Spanish, she said in a low tone, "I'm lonely to-night. Won't you come and have coffee with me?"

"It's a little awkward," I answered, "as I have a friend with me."

She gave the tiniest perceptible shrug of her shapely shoulders.

"If it must be," said she, "bring him along."

I took her at her word, and the three of us sat for some time in the lounge together. I was interested in observing her manner in Bentley's company, as this was the very first time I had ever seen her with a man. But of course she treated him with exactly the same degree of well-bred charm she had always displayed to myself, and no one could ever

have guessed that this was the same woman who bore the reputation of being a " man-hater."

Next day she telephoned to ask whether I would lunch with her at the Savoy. This was a little surprising, since hitherto our meetings had always been at night. But it was nothing in comparison with the surprise she treated me to when, over our meal, I asked what she was proposing to do with herself that evening.

" Well," she answered, " I have been hoping that we may dine together."

" I'd love to," I agreed, much astonished.

And then came the still more amazing part of her proposal.

" I wish you'd bring that friend of yours along, too," she said ; " he's really rather amusing."

Trivial enough, I dare say, to the thinking of any one unacquainted with that curious woman. But remember that hitherto she had steadfastly to be persuaded to dine even in my company alone. Remember, too, her proverbial aversion to the society of men in any shape or form.

The Señora had certainly given me enough surprises that day to satisfy any one : but I was to receive yet another, though this time not from her.

I was walking across the lounge to the hotel office, just after tea, to see whether there were any letters for me. People were passing me in both directions. From somewhere in that shifting throng a single sentence drifted to my ears, cameo-sharp through all the hubbub.

" Baron Sergi sang afterwards," the voice said. " Simply too divine, my dear ! I'm certainly going to try and get him to my next dinner-party."

That was all I heard. Whose voice had spoken ? Should I follow them and say, " Excuse me, but I heard you mention a particular friend of mine ? " Absurd ! The voice might have belonged to any one of a dozen women in view at that moment.

So Sergi was in Europe. People do not talk in Madrid of inviting to their next dinner-party a man who is probably in Tanganyika or thereabouts. . . . Also, the voice had been unmistakably English. The odds seemed to be that Sergi was not merely in Europe, but in England.

I had never made the slightest attempt to discover Sergi's whereabouts. In the first place, I am not the woman to run after any man. Secondly, even had I been of that prideless type, I do not think I could have forgotten that Sergi had deliberately evaded my anticipation that he would propose a future meeting.

Yet I still loved him. Through all the inanities and insincerities of my life in London society I had never forgotten that sensation which had come to me on board the *Adolph Woermann* of having at last met my ideal—the exquisitely rare and infinitely precious combination of the Good Comrade and the Great Lover. Sergi's lean, intellectual face, with its sombre, haunted eyes, lived sharp and clean-cut in my memory where a thousand other faces had faded into oblivion. It was a bitter enough thought that while I, who loved him, should in all likelihood never see him again, a woman to whom he was nothing beyond a divine singing-voice would invite him to her next dinner-party. . . .

I felt so much in the blues about it that I had decided to go out next day and buy some Spanish shoes, and that night at dinner I asked the Señora's advice upon the subject, upon which she offered to accompany me and show me the best shops for what I wanted. Bentley promptly volunteered to go too, but that she would not have.

" My dear man," she said, " you would only be bored to distraction, so for your own sake we won't take you."

" Not even if I promise not to be bored ? " he pleaded.

" No not even then. You see, it worries me a little, too, to have a man hanging about at a loose end when I'm shopping."

So off the two of us went without him, and for an hour or two I was in a seventh heaven of delight over the choosing of my shoes. Then I turned my attention to Spanish shawls, a subject which gave the Señora an opportunity to electrify me yet again.

" If you are interested in Spanish shawls," she observed, " I'd like to show you some I have at my apartment. They are rather a hobby of mine, as it happens."

" I should love to see them," I murmured, feeling rather dazed. I still found great difficulty in realising that this was the same woman whom everybody described as completely unapproachable, and whom hitherto I had certainly found so, at all events in so far as her private life was concerned.

So we called a taxi and set out for her home.

We stopped before a building that looked, if anything, a shade more decrepit than its neighbours and smelt, if possible, even more unsanitary. Then came a climb up an interminable succession of bare stone stairs. And still Señora Carlos, it seemed, did not feel any sort of explanation called for. She simply led the way serenely up those dreadful stairs, then halted at last before a door as disreputable as the rest of the building, threw it open and bade me enter.

I am inclined to think that the woman had deliberately refrained from making any apology for the sordid surroundings of her abode because she did not wish in any way to diminish my shock of surprise at the contrast presented by her home itself.

It will be no exaggeration if I say that the apartments in which I found myself were magnificent. I only saw the hall and drawing-room, but both were positively sumptuous; their decorations must have cost a small fortune, the carpets were voluptuously soft. But the rooms were marked by a strong note of eccentricity, and that note was provided by countless shawls. True, they were shawls of a rare splendour. But never elsewhere, I will swear, were shawls put to the uses Señora Carlos had found for them—to form panellings for the walls, to provide curtains and pelmets. Even the grand piano had a splendid shawl draped across its shining top.

Another eccentric fact about the drawing-room was that all the pictures in it—and there were a considerable number—portrayed either dogs or Señora Dolores Carlos herself. All save one. For on a small table near a window there stood a single large photograph in a silver frame. And that photograph was a portrait of Wing-Commander Peter ——

There was no possibility of a mistake. Feature by feature the face was Peter's; the expression on it was one very familiar to me, even the poise of the head and the shoulders was one I well knew. So the Major had not blundered when he gave me Señora Carlos as my "key." Undoubtedly she could shed light on Peter's fate; otherwise, why her failure to claim acquaintance with him when I had pointed him out in that house-party group?

"Whose portrait is this?" I asked, standing close to the photograph.

"A very old friend of mine," the Señora answered. There was nothing in her tone beyond the slight surprise a well-bred woman might be expected to feel at a piece of rather blunt curiosity on the part of a comparative stranger.

"I'm sorry if I seemed impertinent," I apologised. "The only reason I asked was because he is so exactly like somebody I know—one of the people I pointed out to you in that group, if you remember."

"Oh, no, you're quite mistaken," my hostess assured me. "This man was a Hungarian."

I had no option but to drop the subject. For a time we discussed shawls in all their aspects—their varieties, values and what not. It was a theme upon which the Señora was able to speak with real authority, and I would have listened

with the greatest interest had I not been so preoccupied with very different considerations.

Presently a smart little maid brought in tea.

"You see I know your English tastes," Señora Carlos said with her slow smile. I appreciated the compliment, but could not help thinking at the same time that what she had provided was something rather different from an English tea, for there were no cakes or even bread and butter on the tea-wagon. There was, however, some beautiful fruit, not to mention several varieties of drinks.

The arrival of this refection made it necessary for me to move to another chair, in order to facilitate the process of handing, and I sat down in a big saddle-back affair near to my hostess. As I sank into its luxurious depths I felt a sharp prick in my left thigh. Springing to my feet again, I began to hunt about in the chair to see what had jabbed me.

"Something ran into me," I explained to the Señora, who was watching me with an air of astonished solicitude.

"I am so sorry," she exclaimed. "Some careless person must have dropped a pin or something. . . . Never mind it now; my maid can find it afterwards. Let me bring up another chair for you."

I am not usually a heavy tea-drinker; I seldom, in fact, take more than one cup. That afternoon, however, I could not stop drinking. Every minute I became thirstier and thirstier, and took three cups of tea one after another. Señora Dolores Carlos, in the meantime, mounted her favourite hobby again and began to tell me more about shawls. For a time I listened abstractedly, wondering whether I could decently ask for still another cup of tea. Then suddenly a dreadful sensation of dizziness seized on me. The Señora's voice became tiny and thin, as though she were speaking from an infinite distance; everything in the room looked blurred and distorted. I felt sure I was going to faint.

I am not certain whether I said something about not feeling well, or whether it was just that Señora Carlos took notice of my condition. All I can remember, and that only very dimly, is the great perturbation she showed: as I slid off into oblivion I had a final dream-like impression of her chafing my hands and trying to force brandy between my lips. . . .

I came to in a strange world, but for some while after regaining a more or less conscious condition my brain utterly refused to function. Then gradually my surroundings began to force themselves on my attention. I was lying on a tiny, wretchedly furnished room. How on earth did I come to be

there? The last thing of which I had any recollection was drinking all those cups of tea in the Señora's luxurious drawing-room. . . .

I rose shakily to my feet and set out on a tour of exploration. The door of the room was not locked, nobody seemed to be on guard. I pushed it open, found myself in a narrow, dirty passage-way. I followed it along and emerged into a street.

It was a very mean street, but it did not look like the street in which the Señora's home was situated; and when I surveyed the entrance of the house I felt positive it was not the one at which we had alighted, though it appeared to be a tenement-building of much the same class and description.

I walked in again and knocked at several doors, but always without getting any reply. The whole building seemed to be deserted; my footfall echoed forlornly down empty passage after empty passage. At last, more mystified than ever, I went out into the street again. From some passer-by I asked its name; it was no street I had ever heard of. I seemed to have lost my bearings utterly, and was still too dizzy and benumbed, moreover, to think coherently. The best thing to do seemed to be to go home. Presently a taxi hove in sight; I hailed it and told the driver to take me to the Ritz.

The homecoming of the Prodigal Son was a tame affair in comparison with my return to the hotel. Agnes, my maid, wept copious tears of relief; the poor little thing had been driven almost mad with anxiety by my absence. At first her hysteria seemed uncalled-for; but when I learned from her, to my amazement, that more than twenty-four hours had elapsed since I had left the hotel, her worry became understandable. Twenty-four hours! That meant that I had remained in a state of coma for not less than twenty hours. . . .

My recollections were still all of a jumble; the last thing of which I had any clear remembrance was the drinking of all those cups of tea; thereafter everything was a fog—a shifting, swirling fog through which a multitude of indefinite shapes flitted like spectres.

While I was still trying vainly to sort out my impressions, and wondering vaguely which were genuine and which merely fantastic dream-figments, Bentley came rushing back to the hotel, nearly if not quite as distraught as Agnes had been. He had been turning Madrid upside down in search of me, and was almost frantic with anxiety lest I had met with the same fate as we feared had overtaken poor Peter. . . . When

he found me waiting there for him, shaken and dazed but apparently unharmed, his relief, too, knew no bounds.

Señora Dolores Carlos, needless to say, appeared no more at her customary table in the dining-room of the Ritz. Bentley and I combed Madrid for her dwelling. But Madrid is a great city ; its environs contain hundreds of shabby streets, any one of which might have been the one where she dwelled, and thousands of tenement-buildings like enough to the one masking her luxurious abode. The hotel people denied all knowledge of her beyond the deplorable fact that they had lost an excellent patron. Nobody we asked seemed ever to have heard her name. The only people who might conceivably have been able to help us were the police, and to them we could not go for obvious reasons.

We made up our reports on the chain of events and their *dénouement*, Bentley coded them, and we sent them through to London by mail. Then we sat down to wait for instructions. They arrived in the shape of a wire recalling us home. X—— had not much to say to us, however, when we showed up, except that as we were almost certainly suspect now in Spain, we were not likely to be of further use there. The best course, he added, seemed to be to make an entirely fresh start on Peter ——'s case and hunt about for a new line of investigation.

I made up my mind to find that line of investigation, and I told myself that it should not be so very new after all, since it should begin once more with Señora Dolores Carlos, wherever that elusive person might be. I could not bear the thought of her having got the better of me so easily ; the desire to turn the tables on her became a positive obsession with me. I was ready to move heaven and earth if only it might be given to me to find that woman.

It is a good rule to start at the centre of a field of inquiry and then work outwards. I was in London. Very well, then : let me start with London.

I did. For three weeks I haunted all the expensive hotels and every club which seemed of the class she would be likely to patronise. And everywhere I drew blank.

Then came a memorable night when I had been to a show, and afterwards to a supper-club, with a crowd of friends. At about 4 a.m., more for the sake of a rag than anything else, some one suggested finishing up with a final drink at the —— Club. So down to Gerrard Street we all went. And no sooner had we descended to the subterranean dance-floor than I caught sight of Señora Dolores Carlos.

True to her pose, she sat in splendid isolation, serene and cynical, paying no attention to the creatures of the night,

dopy-looking or gay with a wretched, forced travesty of merriment, who surrounded her. Many were the eyes of desire that sought to intercept her languorous glances, but she heeded them no more than if they had been the eyes of so many lascivious animals.

The moment I could get away from my friends I made a bee-line for her.

"*Buenos noches, Señora* !" I said quietly, halting beside her table.

Let me admit at once that however great may have been my desire to get even with Señora Carlos, I never for one moment ceased to admire her. And never did I admire her more than at this moment, when her cast-iron nerve enabled her to suppress every visible sign of the shock my unexpected presence must have caused her. Or had she seen me enter and had time to prepare herself?

But one way or the other, she was a superb actress. For a moment she stared at me with exactly the degree of blank bewilderment one would naturally experience on being addressed by somebody else's name. Then she smiled her slow, gracious smile—the smile I knew so well—and answered in perfect English, without the faintest trace of accent :

"I'm afraid I don't understand."

"Aren't you Señora Dolores Carlos ?" I demanded.

She shook her head, laughing.

"People are always taking me for a Spaniard," she protested, "though, as a matter of fact, I have never even been to Spain in my life."

"Not lived in a room decorated with Spanish shawls in a Madrid slum," I said sarcastically.

She raised her eyebrows a little and gave the tiniest shrug of her lovely white shoulders, as though deprecating a stranger's discourteous persistence.

"I don't know what you mean at all," she protested. "Really I assure you you're making a mistake."

And with that she turned away. Evidently I was to consider myself dismissed.

There was really nothing more I could say or do without the risk of creating a scene, which was a thing the proprietor would not have at any price. I made up my mind that this was emphatically a situation where two heads would be better than one. At all costs I would follow the Señora home, but first I would ring up Bentley and enlist his corroboration in the matter of identification. I got through to him ; he promised to come at once.

But when I returned to the ballroom Señora Carlos had

disappeared. What had I been thinking of ever to leave her out of my sight? Without question her nimble intelligence had darted straight to the true explanation of my temporary absence and, as usual, she had acted without hesitation. Now I might have to ransack London for weeks again before I should have the luck to chance upon her a second time. . . .

I sat down with my party, outwardly unruffled, I trust, but certainly fuming inwardly. And I had not sat long before a note was brought to me, and I cannot ever remember receiving a message that startled me more. It was brief and to the point, informing me curtly that if I cared to go to a certain address in Dover, I should find a friend in whom I was greatly interested. And it was signed "Dolores Carlos."

Then Bentley arrived with the Major, whom he had thought well to pick up *en route*. I showed them the note and explained what had happened.

"Another trap," Bentley suggested.

"Likely as not," said X——, "but the question is, can we afford not to investigate it? It might mean life or death for poor Peter."

We put a few diplomatic questions to the proprietor, but there was little he could tell us. The Señora had been there once before, he thought, in the company of a certain Cambridge undergraduate. More than that about her he did not know. Within the next day or two X—— followed up this line of inquiry, getting in touch with the undergraduate through some of his friends. It led to nothing, however; the Cambridge boy said he had never even heard of the Señora.

But in the meantime arrangements were in hand for testing the Dover clue. It was decided that I should go—the message being specifically addressed to me—but that X——'s men should escort me there and the Dover police be instructed to keep the house in question under observation.

This house, when we went down to Dover, we found to be an empty one on the outskirts of the town. And in almost the first room we entered we discovered poor Peter —— lying on the floor.

Never in my life have I ever seen such a terrible change in a man. Gone utterly was the fine, fearless expression of the face; the strong, straight form seemed to have sagged and become almost distorted, while his hair had practically turned white. His emaciated body was one mass of bruises, he bore innumerable puncture-marks which could only mean one thing—hypodermic injections. Drugs and systematic ill-treatment had turned that once magnificent man into a

complete wreck, physical and mental, too, for his memory was absolutely gone.

He remained in hospital for six or seven months. Gradually his health picked up and his mind returned to normal. But even to-day he refuses to talk about what happened to him ; indeed, the bare mention of the subject brings a look of abject fear into his eyes.

All he would ever say, even to me, was that he had returned to life out of the depths of hell, and that never before had he understood just what horrors that word, " hell," could cover. He even begged me earnestly to leave the Intelligence, and seemed dreadfully upset when I would not give a positive promise to do so.

I cannot think of any better answer than this story of the fate of Wing-Commander Peter —— to those unthinking fools who affect to despise the Intelligence worker.

ALPHONSE LE COUTRIER

By

MARTHE McKENNA

SHORT and stocky, with absolutely undistinguished features, slow of speech, but a brain quick and razor-edged, and a courage that laughed at danger and scorned death, I think, of all that I met in my activities, Alphonse Le Coutrier filled in every respect the conception of a perfect spy.

That Christmas morning in 1914 when, in French, he answered my inquiry, "I am an Alsatian, mademoiselle," his quiet, friendly voice invisibly drew my sympathies towards him. Here, I thought, is an enemy one could bear; but little did I dream that we should meet again and share adventures which were to bring us face to face with death as a common occurrence.

When I took up my duties at the Roulers hospital I frequently saw him with his Red Cross ambulance, but never by a look or a nod of recognition did he appear to have noticed he had seen me before.

His one peculiarity was the holding of his trouser-leg by the cloth with his right hand, as if holding a gown, as he strolled along, never seeming to be in a hurry.

On his discovering the nature of my activities we quickly became appreciative and fast friends. . . .

A veritable reign of terror commenced in the town, and spy-catching became a mania in the area; for spy-catching was a profitable business to the German Secret Service agents and troops. He who caused a spy to be convicted received that which was most dear to the heart of the German rank-and-file: firstly, Iron Cross, 1st class; secondly, immediate promotion; thirdly, a Base job.

Amongst the civilians, in café or in home, nothing else was discussed, and the more faint-hearted ones murmured against the activities of these mysterious spies. Thinking of their own poor skins, they exclaimed, "Are not conditions terrible enough without these spy activities bringing down extra punishments on our innocent heads?" But they failed to see that the work, if it accomplished nothing else, was rattling the "bully," and the rattled bully, although vicious, is a beaten being.

I was full of nerves myself. A sudden step behind me in

the hospital, I had to summon all my will-power to prevent myself from screaming aloud ; or the tramp, tramp of a squad of soldiers at night on the cobble-stones in front of our home caused me to tremble like a leaf for hours.

I heard the name of " Laura " whispered several times, and one breath-taking second nearly unnerved me altogether. A sergeant in the hospital suddenly asked laughingly, " Fräulein, are you Laura ? "

Not turning my head, I hastily answered, " No ; you will probably find the person is a Prussian General, if he's ever discovered, sergeant," remembering the bet an officer once made in my presence.

The sergeant chuckled and remarked, " Perhaps you are not far wrong, Fräulein."

Then came a thunderbolt which required all our fortitude to keep wits and courage together.

It was Alphonse who brought the news, and it was he who, calm and unhurried, parried the terrible danger. He stole in by the rear end of the café at midnight, a very unusual occurrence with him, and I knew by his demeanour that some disaster threatened.

" Sister," he said, with a very grave face, " I've got to do something quickly. I've heard news to-day which, I think, if we don't move sharp may turn serious for all of us." Alphonse went on to explain.

Agnes Verbrey, the good-looking daughter of the owner of a busy cigar-store opposite the station, was friendly with Gustav Woolf, a German plain-clothes Secret Service agent. *Billeted in Roulers, he was attached to Army Headquarters* Intelligence Staff at Thielt. We were aware that he was a dangerous, capable agent.

Agnes was a courageous, intelligent girl, and she allowed the little pleasantries of the detective to develop. Every morning, when his duty did not take him from the town, he would arrive at the cigar-store carrying a single rose, which he would gracefully hand to Agnes, with some suitable compliment, at the same time ordering his cigar stock for the day.

German Secret Service agents, for their own carousals, avoided the cafés and public places, so the detective had requested Agnes, as a special favour to him, to put at his disposal a back sitting-room for one afternoon. He required it, he said, to give a farewell bottle and a cigar to an old comrade who was about to leave the Army Intelligence Headquarters to take up a dangerous mission in another area. After a little demur, Agnes managed to obtain the consent of her parents to the arrangement.

One afternoon the detective arrived with two roses and Comrade George Prassek. Prassek we knew very well, as he spoke Flemish fluently, but that was all we knew to his good.

Agnes had promised, so far as the call of the store allowed, to wait on and serve the two comrades so soon to be parted. They were both, at first, rather reticent, but Agnes, from snatches of conversation, divined that the mission of Comrade Prassek would be of infinite interest to the intrepid band of spies in the Roulers area.

Once, when the girl was in the room, Gustav Woolf turned to her and, in a sentimental voice, said, " Agnes, my rose, my Kamerad George Prassek is about to leave us. You will drink a glass to his success, for when he returns he will be loaded with honours."

Comrade Prassek smirked, and in a boastful burst said, " After I've cleared up this nest of rats, things should be easier for you in this treacherous district ; so, my Gustav, you cannot expect me to return to this hole. I shall demand a Base job round Brussels. There a man can live. Here, life is just existence."

Agnes's curiosity was sufficiently aroused to make her determined to discover the destination and kind of mission Prassek had been detailed for. She drank the wine, making suitable wishes, excused herself and withdrew.

As the two comrades drank their last bottles together, their tongues became loosened, and their intentions boastful, so Agnes gave a very attentive ear to the door, and she discovered this : Prassek, with his fluent knowledge of Flemish, was to disappear from the district, but was to reappear in another district, with forged passport complete, and pose as a fugitive Flemish workman anxious to cross the Dutch frontier. He was to assert his burning desire to join the Belgian Army, and Eecloo would be the organisation Prassek would endeavour to get into touch with. Eecloo ! Where the headquarters of our organisation was situated, both for passing over the frontier vital information and hard-pressed fugitives !

The two agents left the stores and Agnes in complete contentment with themselves and the war in general.

If Prassek was allowed to worm his way into the Eecloo organisation there would be no end of the tale of disaster. A bull in a china shop would be nothing to the damage Prassek could do, and the method he was to pursue and excuse held forth was easily the quickest way of gaining the confidence of the bureau.

In the dim light of the flickering candle Alphonse looked at me, and his face was set as grim as death.

"Sister, before I came here I thought of a plan. As we Alsatians are not trusted by our Prussian comrades-in-arms, we are never allowed to return to our homeland on leave. We must ask for another point of the compass, and the farther the point is from our homes the better the Prussian likes it, and the more likely we are to obtain permission to spend a few days enjoying other scenery than our own homeland. I've never asked for leave up to date, but I'm going to to-morrow, or, to be precise, to-day morning. I have a comrade in a Ghent hospital ; him I am anxious to visit. I must also get this news over of that movement. I shall hand it over to a responsible agent, for *that cannot wait*."

Alphonse was referring to great preparations we had observed moving west towards the coast. Battalion after battalion had marched past on the outskirts of the town, as if making a great detour. All marks on the troops and transport were carefully covered, but Alphonse had been able to get into conversation with two stragglers, and had recognised them for "storm troops." The transport had strange-looking appliances in tow, and again, without much difficulty, he had found out that these were the new flame-throwers. In addition, the Courtrai-Brussels railway, which made a loop detour similar to a crescent round the town of Roulers, was chock-a-block with pontoon-bridge material and the bulky reinforcements for the Marines, who were holding the coast sector.

"I cannot rest," said Alphonse urgently, "until I have made some attempt to warn our relations. Meanwhile, you keep quiet here, sister ; do nothing rash. Nobody knows, or as yet dreams, who you are."

My heart gave a great bound of relief, for I was certain if Alphonse could get away in time Prassek would stand small chance of destroying us.

"What was the name of that tall runner who came once to you, sister ?"

"Of course," I said, "you will want to know where to find him." I told Alphonse that the cottage of Jan van Candalaere was a small dwelling on the junction of the Eecloo-Lembeke road. He could not mistake it, for it stood alone. I said, "Only approach the place at night."

"Prassek has forty-eight hours' start, but I have this advantage : he does not know me by sight, but I know him." Alphonse mused.

Ghent would not see Alphonse, but the small country town of Eecloo would, and I felt it in my heart to be sorry for George Prassek's dreams of a Base job.

Obeying the order of Alphonse, I remained perfectly quiet during the next few days, but on the Monday morning I could not work. I pleaded a sick headache, and the Oberartz let me return home. Unable to keep still, I strained my eyes looking at every figure passing in the square.

Late in the afternoon, after an age of waiting, to my unutterable relief I beheld the unhurried slouch and characteristic holding of the gown of Alphonse ! No mother ever beheld her son return safely from the trenches with greater relief and joy than I beheld the stocky figure of Alphonse.

I did not get an opportunity to speak to him for three days, but I was content. I knew if there had been any urgent necessity Alphonse would have come. That was the essence of his faith in me. He never questioned that I would understand that events had straightened themselves out for us. But I heard the whole story from him later.

Without any difficulty, Alphonse reached Eecloo the same evening. Scorning the roundabout train journey, he "jumped" ambulances and lorries, all the time being mortally afraid that he would not arrive in the district before Prassek had found some fatal clues which might have been already reported to that agent's chiefs.

The dusk was deepening as he arrived in the small country town of Eecloo. Walking through to the Lambeke road, he readily recognised the cottage of Jan van Candalaere, but against the wall near the door was the bicycle of a feldgendarme, so Alphonse decided to wait until this unwelcome visitor departed. He was troubled. Had Jan been raided already ? This would make matters desperately unpleasant, thought Alphonse as he sat himself down some distance from the door in a friendly clump of bushes on the opposite side of the road. Nobody passing along the road could see him in his hiding-place, but he could watch every movement from the cottage.

After a long wait, at last the scion of law and order came out noisily and somewhat unsteadily mounted his bicycle. Alphonse immediately understood, and with the understanding was great relief. Jan mixed his work as a runner with selling illicit Schnapps. Now that there was no game left for the poacher he must needs dabble in some other illegal pursuit.

Alphonse approached the door and knocked. A great, tall figure, absolutely unafraid, flung open the door and stood threateningly looking at the stocky figure of the soldier.

"What want ye ? " demanded the giant in the doorway.

"Comrade, I've lost my way. I'm looking for the cottage of Jan van Candelaere," returned Alphonse meekly.

"Oh, you are, are you? And what will my little comrade do with Jan van Candelaere's cottage when he finds it?" asked the imperturbable Jan.

Alphonse whispered, "Try to sell some safety-pins to the good Jan's wife."

Jan moved his great form sideways, leaving just enough room for Alphonse to pass. "Come in, come in. Wife, put out a plate and a glass for a friend," called Jan in a hearty voice, and closing the door, not before he had had a good look up and down the road, he hobbled over and sat himself down on a chair near a long Flemish stove.

A tall, buxom woman, built on the same generous scale as her husband, busied herself preparing a meal for the famished Alphonse, who, with a pang of disappointment, noticed that the poacher had a huge, fresh-looking bandage wrapped round his foot.

"Eat first; we'll see what we can do for you afterwards," ordered Jan.

Alphonse gratefully attacked the meal, and not a word was spoken.

"A thimble of Schnapps, comrade?" inquired Jan, after Alphonse had finished.

"*Non, merci,*" returned Alphonse.

The poacher looked with considerable surprise at a soldier refusing such heaven-sent comforts. "Ha! Well, each one to his taste. Now, comrade, the birds are coming over. Up with the gun and fire away."

Alphonse told of Prassek and his plot. As he progressed with the denouncement he saw the face of the hearty Jan change until it took on the terrible look of the hunter about to seize his prey. The only remark he made was to his wife. "Wife, these things will always happen when I've broken my foot. When the 'knubs' are beaten, my head'll be broken, I suppose."

The woman waited until Alphonse had finished, and, with startled eyes, she asked:

"Soldier, what was this clever one like?"

Alphonse described Prassek minutely.

"Ha! There, that clever one was here to-day!" she said, as Jan nearly fell out of his chair with surprise. "Jan, here, was away to the doctor's with his foot. This afternoon a tired Flemish workman came in and sat himself down there"—pointing to the chair that the bulky form of Jan filled.

"But, soldier," continued the woman, taking no notice

of her husband's surprise, "in these days we have to be careful, so I let him say and do, and I watched as I washed. He told me the usual tale of being forced by the 'knubs' to work at the Front, building concrete dug-outs. He had skipped, as two of his comrades were blown to bits in a sudden bombardment. What that clever one said against the 'knubs' is beyond belief, but I see now why he knows them so well! At the end of his lovely tale he said quietly that, if he could find a way, he was going over the frontier to join the Belgian Army. I said nothing, just nodded my head like a stupid ass, because I was puzzled." She paused, mentally collecting her suspicions of the afternoon. "I've sat with Jan here near thirty years, day in day out, and you understand, soldier, in the old days we had many good friends to drop in to see us. The men take a glass and smoke a pipe. Always the pipe. The pipe is one of the biggest comforts in a Flemish man's life, and Jan and his pipe are never separated. I've seen it filled and emptied so often it's second nature to me, for I can tell the humour Jan is in the way the pipe pulls. Well, *when a Flemish man fills his pipe, he always builds a dome of tobacco over the bowl and lights it upside down; but this clever one just filled his pipe, without the dome, and lit it bowl upwards.* I thought, better let Jan have a look at you first, my cherub."

The admiration on Jan's face was comical to see as his wife unfolded her tale of watchfulness. He was speechless, and could only look at Alphonse, nodding his great head towards his good wife in token of his unbounded admiration.

"He's coming again to-morrow, to ask Jan if any jobs can be found hereabouts," she told the two interested listeners.

Alphonse, having obtained the complete confidence of the good-natured couple, introduced the subject of his information and the urgency of getting it "over."

Jan shook his head. "For two or three days it can't be done. I'm finished for weeks, and the others are away. Two have disappeared in four weeks. The dirty patrols got them, and we hear nothing of them again. We'll meet them up above, perhaps, some time."

Alphonse understood the meaning. Jan meant heaven. The runners had been captured and shot by the patrols.

Alphonse asked, "Could I not go to the wire myself? If given instructions, I am sure I could find my way, and, as I am dressed as a German soldier, I'd stand much more chance of getting through."

Jan shouted with laughter until the rafters in the cottage rang.

"Soldier, do you think it's a walk like the little misses go

to Sunday vespers? Ho, ho!" laughed Jan. "A German soldier! A 'knub'! Why, we've forgotten that trick months ago"; and as he wiped his eyes he continued seriously, "There's been dozens shot as German soldiers, aye, and as officers, too. Those dirty rats shoot first and investigate afterwards. Listen, comrade. When I was eight years old, my old one kicked me out of the house every night, fine, rain or snow. 'Don't come back here until you have two brace of hare and three brace of rabbit,' he ordered. I've been a night poacher for more years than I care to think of. It's in my blood now; I must go out now and then. And I know every blade of grass in this district for thirty kilometres around. But look at that"—pointing to his hair, a stiff, unruly mop, but glistening steely-white—"that's through going to the wire."

"Still, I'm determined to try," said Alphonse, firmly and quietly.

Jan looked at his wife as if for guidance. There must have been consent on her face, for in a different tone he said:

"All right. But you will have to take him over to Mynheer Verhagen."

The woman nodded. Alphonse, although weary to death, protested against Jan's wife troubling herself to guide him to the house of Verhagen.

"It's a farm, and you'd never find it even in daytime," she said quietly. "Some one must go with you from here. You could never get to see him alone."

Brut Verhagen was the principal agent in the district, and everything went through his hands. Alphonse's heart beat a little quicker; he knew he was about to meet one of the leading figures of the Intelligence Service in occupied Belgium.

"Comrade," warned Jan, as his wife was making ready for the journey, "do everything she says without question. She's like me, she can smell patrols. And leave the clever one to me."

As they left the kitchen, Jan snuffed out the light. The woman led the way out, and, pulling her shawl tightly round her figure, she whispered to Alphonse, "Follow me, step with step. When you see me bend down, you do the same." She glided away like a flickering shadow with extraordinary quickness, direct over the fields, taking advantage of every spot of cover.

Alphonse had a second sense at night (which I had been thankful and grateful for on more than one occasion), but Jan's wife, notwithstanding her bulk, was never once more

than a faint shadow, and he had to strain every faculty to keep the vanishing shadow in sight. Once, as they were gliding along the inside of a deep hedge, Alphonse, straining his eyes to keep the figure of his guide in view, suddenly saw her stop, crouch down and wait. She was part of the hedge. Alphonse followed suit. He could hear nothing, only the gentle, swaying croon of the trees. After a few seconds' wait, his heart beating furiously, he heard the faint noise of some one speaking. Gradually the voices came nearer, and then along the by-road on the other side of the hedge three Germans passed on bicycles. "A patrol of feld-gendarmes," whispered the woman, and Alphonse wondered at her acute hearing.

After threading their way through a wood, they arrived at what Alphonse took to be the rear side of a large farmstead situated in a wood.

They approached the living-quarters, and the woman whispered, "You can throw better than me. Take a handful of gravel and throw it at that window three times."

Alphonse did as requested.

They waited a considerable time, and then, without more ado, the woman said, "Come." Making for a side door, she passed into the darkness of the building. Alphonse had heard nor seen nothing, but he followed blindly into the building which seemed like an Open Sesame to Jan's wife. In the corridor she groped for and took his hand, leading him across a large room. She stopped and knocked, and on hearing a muffled "Enter," she pushed open a door. They were standing in the presence of a little, bald old man, shrivelled up almost to nothing. He stood with his back to an old-fashioned lamp which stood on a desk.

"Ah, Matilda, you have company," greeted the old man in a cracked, high voice.

"Yes, Mynheer Verhagen," returned the woman with deep respect. "He has news, and a warning, so we decided that I had better bring him over."

"Well done, well done, Matilda. Take a glass of wine in the corner over there, my good woman."

Alphonse had a sense of disappointment at beholding for the first time what must be the brains of the famous Eecloo bureau. But the soldier's tired brain jumped into instant activity as the old gentleman turned a steely glare on him, and rapped out:

"What number, friend?"

"Number Five," answered Alphonse.

"Ah, Roulers." And his eyes took on a kindly gleam.

Courteously he asked, " And to what am I indebted for this visit ? "

Alphonse rapidly told him : firstly, of Prassek ; then of his news regarding the concentration of reinforcements in the sector of the Marines. He ended his narrative by saying :

" I understand, Mynheer, you are without runners for the moment. I myself will go, if you will give me the instructions and direction."

" Very well, you shall go, if you wish it, after I have given you your instructions."

As the woman was preparing to leave, Verhagen said softly to her, " Oh, Matilda, tell Jan I want the police identity card of Prassek."

" I'll tell him, Mynheer." And before she left the room she said, " Good-night, soldier. God take care of you. Good-night, Mynheer." The great-hearted woman left the house as silent as a shadow.

Brut Verhagen rapped on his desk and an old serving-maid entered the room.

" Show Mynheer the bedroom."

Alphonse was guided along a corridor to a plain but comfortable bedroom. No sooner had he flung himself on the bed than he was fast asleep.

II

HE WAS wakened by the servant bringing coffee and bread. In a dull, toneless voice she said :

" Mynheer wishes you to keep to your room until I call you."

Alphonse had no time to question the woman, as she left the room immediately. The soldier thought, " Well, I suppose he has good reasons for it." He refused to allow his mind to dwell on the coming trip, but he had a premonition, almost certain in its urgency, that something tremendous would come to pass on that weird stretch of wire.

There was a knock at the door, and the servant, opening it, said, " Mynheer will see you now. Come."

Brut Verhagen was poring over a large-scale map of the district.

" Forgive me, my boy, for keeping you so long, but I have two feld-gendarme sergeants billeted on me. They occupy part of the other wing, and are no trouble whatever ; with long use they have become quite friendly. To them I am a

crippled invalid. Their times of arriving and departing are punctual, so what I did was just an ordinary precaution until they had left." Briskly taking up a long, thin ebony pointer, he began to trace a route on the map.

"This is the farm here, four kilometres south-east of St. Laurent. For a period the place was commandeered as a transport headquarters, but the out-of-the-way situation, and my repeated complaints that the noise affected my illness, caused the General to move the whole thing to the other side of St. Laurent, much to my relief," he said, with a twinkle in his eyes.

Pointing to a dotted red line running towards the Dutch frontier, he explained: "This was an old route leading up to the all-important wire, and there was an underground arrangement for passing underneath the obstruction. It was an almost natural burrow which Jan had discovered; but a passing German airman unluckily spotted the fairly well-worn pathway. He got his observer to take photographs of the area, and the local commandant set a trap. Fortunately, it was Jan that went up that night. He was going with two French airmen, and the hunters became the hunted."

He chuckled, and then went on, "Jan is a wonderful woodsman, and I really think that big one will be sorry when the Germans are bundled out of the country. Now I will send a guide with you as far as the canal, but she cannot await your return, so mark well your route," and with his pointer he traced a route for Alphonse to follow on his return journey. "I give you the easy route back because you will be alone. You see, this will bring you back to precisely the same spot that you and Matilda arrived at last night. Throw the gravel and watch carefully the top left-hand corner of the window. If you see a minute stab of white light, enter. If you see red, wait until the white appears. I think that's sufficient for the return.

"Your guide to the canal will be as quick and as silent as Matilda, and this route you are going by has only been used four times before. It's one found by the invaluable Jan. The guide will show you a ford over the canal. From the spot where you are sent over, take a northerly direction along the bank of the canal until you reach a tumbledown woodman's hut. Be extremely careful here, for the patrols sometimes use this place, as most soldiers will, to while away the tedious hours." And naïvely he added, "We use this place to make our way up to the wire just for that reason. It's well used, and therefore worth the risk as a jumping-off mark. You make a small detour here, but get the hut direct at your back. You

will find, if you search carefully, an almost invisible snake-like furrow that leads flush up to the wire."

"Now, my boy, as we have plenty of time before you must start, I will give you a few instructions. Some little hint may be the saving of your life. But, mind you, each time I have been up I have been in the company of Jan, than whom no man could have had a more dependable guide. The first and foremost injunction is this: *Strike first and investigate afterwards*"; and the grey, sunken eyes of the old man became mesmeric in their intensity. "Last night you had your baptism of being guided, but your senses were dulled, as you were greatly fatigued. To-night, all your faculties will be terribly alert, as mine were on the first occasion.

"Take a quill to chew; it moistens the parched mouth and prevents that betrayer, a sudden, forced cough. I shall supply you with the costume. A tight-fitting, dark kind of overall. And you must blacken your hands and face. I myself shall weight the news-packet, for it must be evenly balanced, and it needs a strong throw to carry paper thirty-five metres true.

"When you start out from here at four o'clock, if all goes well, you will arive at the wire somewhere about six o'clock. The drain-furrow will lead you to the prearranged spot.

"The patrols nowadays are famished beings, and at this time they crowd around the cook-kitchens. You must then give your call of the owl. From the other side no sign will be given, for owls do not answer. Take the best cover you can find, some distance away, and cover yourself with leaves. This is the worst part of your ordeal. You must wait—wait an eternity—and a thousand doubts will assail you. 'Have I given my call loud enough? Can I throw so far?' The distance will look enormous."

As the daylight commenced to fade, the stony-looking servant swiftly and silently guided Alphonse to the canal-crossing. He was dressed in tight-fitting overalls and a pair of rubber shoes. He carried thick rubber gloves, in case the throw misfired and he was forced to handle the electric wire. Round his waist was a broad leather belt with a sheath. In it was a long trench-dagger.

The old man had forbidden firearms. "They make too much noise," he had said with a grim smile. "The password for to-night, my boy, is 'Flushing'."

Alphonse had great fortune, for he crossed the canal and reached the wire without the slightest incident, and well within the specified time mentioned by Brut Verhagen.

He gave the call of the owl, and it was well that the far-seeing old chief had given Alphonse his vivid impressions of the eerie wait.

Alphonse moved away some little distance back, blacked his face and hands with some " baker's coal " that the servant had handed to him, and settled himself under a pile of October leaves and commenced his long wait.

The desolate spot with the weird-looking wire running taut across the country was frightening. He tried to impress on his mind all the outstanding instructions he had received. He found himself, time after time, fumbling at the package in his broad overall-pocket.

Two patrols passed, but at some little distance : one on his side of the wire, and the other on the opposite side.

The first caused considerable heart-beating, but the second time he found himself trying to make out the figure in the darkness.

It was completely dark now, and the night promised to continue so, for dark clouds gathered in the heavens.

When he had first arrived he had noticed that a short, shallow hedge ran just near and parallel with the wire for some distance, and he had decided that it would make excellent cover for the throwing of the package and receiving the news from the other side.

In a few moments, he decided, he would take up his position there, taking a branch of a tree with him to serve as the " periscope."

The urge was so great that at last he made the move, more to silence the urge than in order to be there ready to speak to the other agent when called.

He was lying comfortably flat along the bottom of the hedge, willing himself to stop the eternal fumbling with the package of papers, when suddenly the blood in his veins congealed. At first he *felt* the presence of some thing or person moving towards him. It passed through his mind that perhaps it was a refugee who had found his way up and was awaiting his opportunity to make his lone dash over the wire.

The form was creeping stealthily towards him, and with a shock it came to him that the creeping figure must pass over him, for the stealthy one would follow the contour of the hedge.

" Shall I challenge ? " thought Alphonse in a panic.

Then the staring, mesmeric eyes of Brut Verhagen and the insistent, cracked voice came : " Strike first ! Strike first ! " The monotonous call of the owl came plaintively over the wire, and Alphonse's hand went swiftly to the handle of the dagger. The form crept on. " *Strike first !* " And Alphonse,

like a streak of lightning, struck with terrific force. A gasping, gurgling grunt, and the figure of a man collapsed by his side.

His brain was working with bell-like clearness now. He crept a little to one side, half rose, and in an agitated whisper called, "Flushing."

Back came the reassuring whisper, "Flushing."

Then the rising stick. Alphonse took his precious packet and hurled with all his strength. It fell true. After a pause he hoisted his branch, moved to one side, and almost stumbled over the form of the man lying in a grotesque attitude. The package from the other side came hurtling through the air.

Again a wait, and always his subconscious thoughts with the form just a few feet from him. He was looking intently, and he saw a dark blot. It spoke as if from another world. In French came the warning, "A German Secret Service agent visited Flushing yesterday afternoon and left, we believe for Eecloo, this morning. Our man shadowed him to the frontier. We don't know as yet what he is after, and we were unable to identify him, as it's the first time this agent has been over. But the man he was in touch with we have reason to believe knows this particular district well. In twenty-four hours we shall know all. Thanks. Anything to report?"

"Only that you will see specially to a letter addressed to Paris in the package."

"Very good. I'm from B.I. (British Intelligence), but I will hand the letter, with the special instructions, to F.I. (French Intelligence). *En avant!*" came the warning.

Alphonse saw the form disappear, and, keeping perfectly still, saw a patrol pass by on the other side.

He crouched to the figure and forced himself to search it. The body was dressed in the rough clothes of a labourer, and suddenly he found himself examining the clothes with one hand; in the other he held the bloodstained trench-dagger in a threatening attitude over the still form, for grasped in the right hand was a German officer's automatic revolver. "This won't do," he told himself. Calming himself down, he went through the pockets methodically. A clay pipe and tobacco, a package of papers, and an old pocketbook. He searched further and found a leather case which would hold the identity-card of the dead man. He gazed into the face with a shiver, but, like his own, it was blackened, so he gave not a second look, as in the darkness it would have been impossible to recognise even a comrade.

Alphonse felt in the inside coat-pocket and found a card-

board case. The feel was familiar. He put it to his nose and sniffed. It was an ordinary cardboard case holding five large-sized, good-quality cigars.

Gathering all the papers and cigars, Alphonse covered up the form of the dead man and stealthily commenced the return journey.

On arriving behind the woodman's hut, three feld-gendarmes were about to depart.

Alphonse again found himself grasping the dagger in his hand. A basilisk rage swept over him, and he had to summon all his will-power to prevent himself from jumping at the unsuspecting gendarmes. The " blood-lust " was on him.

The unforgivable sin. The unforgivable sin.

With unconscious cunning he waited a considerable time, then crossed the canal.

He found himself throwing gravel at the window. Once, twice, thrice. The minute stab of white light, and with a stealthy rush he was into the house.

But after that Alphonse remembered no more.

Brut Verhagen sat in his study, facing a very bewildered Alphonse. The Alsatian had recovered quickly after his sudden collapse, which had been caused by loss of blood from a wound received either as he delivered the death-blow to the unknown intruder at the wire or as he rushed back in a half-wild state to the farm.

Verhagen spoke soothingly and quietly to the over-wrought Alphonse.

" The messages from Intelligence are all safe, but, in addition, you had in your possession a cigar-case with the name of a Flushing cigar-store printed on it, the bill for one night of a person who stayed at a Flushing hotel, a pocket-book with very useful information and, last but by no means least, that person's dual identity-cards. Now," he continued, almost in a whisper, " that man is the man whom we are all for the moment very much interested in—George Prassek, the German Secret Service agent. On one identity-card are the particulars of Lieutenant George Prassek ; on the other is Paul Vandenbeele, a Flemish labourer."

For the moment the full significance of the terrible encounter did not strike the confused mind of the Alsatian, so, without trying to fathom the mystery that old Verhagen was unfolding, Alphonse related the story of his adventures, and, as he explained, the startling truth came to him, with its seeming amazing coincidence. The man lying dead at the wire was none other but George Prassek ! Almost at the same

instant the truth must have struck the old chief, for his eyes gleamed with a smouldering fire as he spoke.

"You have removed a dangerous and persistent individual by to-night's work; but there is something behind all this. Something that I think, with these papers in my possession, I can untangle."

Alphonse told of the agent's warning, and that the man was shadowed to the frontier. "That, of course, was undoubtedly Prassek," said Verhagen, and Alphonse agreed. After a long pause, Verhagen said:

"Listen, my boy. For a long time now I have been suspicious of these two rendezvous. The cigar-store and the hotel. Employed in the hotel is a porter who, I believe, is a Belgian. His wife is a Dutchwoman and she serves in the cigar-store. I must get those two over here. Oh, yes, I must get them, and quickly—they are getting to know too much. It's they who have discovered Jan's route to the wire, and it's they who have betrayed it to our late friend Prassek. That route is too precious to give up just now. I must get them immediately, immediately, before they have the sense to miss Prassek and go elsewhere with their information. I'll risk the German not having disclosed his mission and destination to any one outside this precious pair. In forty-eight hours I'll have them both in my hands," prophesied the old chief grimly. "It will be rather a pity you will not be here to see the dénouement," he added.

"I must return to Roulers for Monday, and before then I must make some effort to discover my 'comrade' who is wounded in Ghent, if only to cover up my tracks. I will first of all take a long sleep, and at dusk to-morrow evening I will get you to ask your good maid to conduct me to the house of Jan. All of this will take up my leave-period, and I shall just have time to get back to Roulers so as to report back on time."

"Yes, it is better not to risk the daylight to regain the Ghent-Eecloo road, for if you were stopped in this out-of-the-way district you might find it hard to explain your reasons for being here. Certainly I will give orders for my servant to guide you to Jan's cottage."

In a fast-gathering dusk Alphonse, refreshed, took his leave of the old man. Brut Verhagen shook him affectionately by the hand and said quietly, "*Bon chance*, my boy. We may meet again, and I hope in happier circumstances. If at any time I can be of service, count on me. *Au revoir*."

Silently and swiftly Alphonse was guided to the cottage of the poacher. The Lembeke road was deserted, so Alphonse

crossed and knocked. The door was flung open by the bulky Jan.

"Ho, ho; come in, come in!" he shouted on catching sight of the stocky figure of the soldier. "Wife, a plate for a friend." In a whisper he inquired, "Did you go up?"

Alphonse nodded, and in return asked, more to relieve his overwrought nerves than that he doubted what the answer would be, "Did the Flemish workman call yesterday?"

"Why, no," answered Jan. "I was waiting and waiting for the clever one, but never a flutter did I see."

Alphonse gave the urgent message of Brut Verhagen, and the wife of Jan said, "As soon as you have eaten I will go over to see him."

As they ate, Jan inquired to where Alphonse was bound.

"Ghent," answered the soldier.

"Not a bad town, but spoiled these days," said the poacher.

"I don't know it," said Alphonse. "I've never been there."

"Ha, you are stationed in another town?" asked Jan, and, seeing no reason why he should not divulge his sector to the good-hearted pair, he said:

"Yes, in Roulers."

"Goodness me! My wife's sister lives there, and I have often made the trip. I suppose I'll be coming soon again, just as quickly as my foot mends, and as soon as I have settled the account with the clever one."

"I'm afraid that will have to wait a long time now, Jan, for Prassek is lying at the wire, dead."

The astonished eyes of the poacher looked at Alphonse.

"At the wire? What do you mean?"

And rapidly the soldier told the couple what had occurred. He took his leave and regained the Eecloo-Ghent road, satisfied that in the unlikely event of being challenged he had sufficient reasons for being in the district.

He "jumped" a motor-lorry going to Ghent, and after a few inquiries he found to his great relief that his supposed comrade had been evacuated to Germany. His tracks covered thus, he made his way back to Roulers.

THE SHIP SCUTTLERS

By

S. T. FELSTEAD

"Sunk without trace" was one of the classic phrases of the Great War. Here is a story from a British secret service agent in New York which reveals the truth behind a mystery that wrought untold havoc before it was checked.

EARLY in 1915, when it had become evident to the Germans that they were in for a long war, the Admiralty Staff in Berlin dispatched to America one of their crack young officers—Franz von Rintelen. His mission was to prevent, by hook or by crook, the shipments of food and munitions that were coming into England from the States.

Travelling through the war zone in a false name on a neutral ship, he reached America safely and at once reported himself to the German Ambassador in Washington, Count von Bernstorff, who, from all accounts, received him none too cordially. Neither did the respective naval and military attachés, Captain Karl Boy-Ed and Captain Franz von Papen. Rintelen possessed what was to all intents and purposes a roving commission—and he had the money to spend.

Establishing himself in a New York office, he first of all spent some millions of pounds buying up supplies which might have gone to Allied sources.

Then one day chance threw in his way an amazing opportunity to strike a death blow at the Allies. A German, who said he was a chemist, presented himself at the office where Rintelen carried on business in an assumed name, with a story of bombs that could easily be planted on ships crossing the Atlantic, and destroy them without the slightest trace.

Rintelen jumped at the opportunity. Tests were arranged, and proved so satisfactory that the chemist was given *carte blanche* to manufacture them. Then men were enrolled who would undertake the risky job of secreting them on outgoing ships. New York, and the Manhattan front in particular, swarmed with Germans only too anxious to do something for their country.

For three months or more, one ship after another vanished in mysterious fashion. U-boats could not be held accountable ;

the key to the solution undoubtedly lay in New York itself. The docks were patrolled day and night in vain. Panic was beginning to overcome the men who manned these ships. Fabulous wages had to be offered them to sign on, and insurance companies looked askance at taking risks certain to involve them in huge loss.

But then came a clue. One evening my telephone bell rang with instructions to hold myself ready to take part in a expedition for which it would be wise to come armed. Four other men, two British and two American, were going down to the waterside on the track of some German agents who were thought to be responsible for a state of affairs that was fast becoming disastrous.

I reached my destination, a dingy little saloon in one of the back streets running down to the docks. The neighbourhood itself was no inviting spot for an Englishman just then ; there were disaffected Irish, as well as truculent Germans, hanging around, to whom one hint of my mission would have meant a knock on the head and, like as not, a cold and lonely death in the muddy water.

Nor did the proprietor himself appear more inviting. A big, red-whiskered fellow with a scarred face, he looked at me with no friendly eye, as did the other men in his saloon.

"What are ye after wantin'?" he inquired in a thick brogue as I called him into the passage.

"Green grass," I whispered, giving the password as I had been instructed.

He shot another suspicious glance at me, then said, "Follow me, and pull ye're hat well over ye're eyes."

In true conspirator fashion I trod on his heels as he pushed his way through the bar, elbowing on one side a crowd of drunken sailors who were enjoying what would probably be their last carouse, up a flight of dirty, rickety stairs which wound interminably to a floor on the top. A knock at a door and I found myself in the presence of the Secret Service men I had come to meet.

Four more formidable opponents for any spies to encounter could not be found in the whole of the United States. Captain Grayson, a daring British officer who had already been into Germany for the Intelligence Service, Major Mortimer, a huge, hefty fellow better known to the world as one of the greatest tacklers on the football field, and two American Secret Service men I knew named O'Reilly and Finucane, were sitting at the table awaiting my arrival.

"Come in," said Grayson cheerily. "We're just about ready to go. We'll have one more drink before we start."

With a bottle of Irish whisky before us, he told me the plans for our momentous evening.

" Yesterday," he began, " one of my spies informed me that a German agent would be going aboard the *Shropshire Siren* to-night. She sails for Liverpool to-morrow night, but she'll be lucky to reach England if we don't find the bombs this fellow intends to plant down in her holds. If what I have been told is true, he's going to plant them all over the ship."

" Bombs ! " I exclaimed.

" Yes," said Grayson grimly. " None of your common dynamite or anything like that. They've had a chemist at work for a long while turning out bombs that are burning ships down to the water's edge. We've had our eye on a fellow up in Hoboken for the last two or three months. He's a clever devil and we haven't been able to catch him at it, but to-night, something may happen."

" I may as well tell you," he added slowly, " that you're in for a sticky night. The fellow we are after will be armed and he may also throw something in your face that will leave you without any eyes—or perhaps even a face. So you won't need me to remind you that it will be every man for himself. I'm going to put you in one of the ship's holds with O'Reilly. Mortimer and Finucane will be in the other."

" And you ? " I asked.

A ghost of a smile flitted across the tense face of the captain.

" I shall be wandering around with a pistol in my hand," he said. " We don't know where this fellow is concealed. There's only a watchman on board and for all we know he may be hidden underneath the coal bunkers. He may be somewhere in the fo'castle or he may be running about like a rat hiding himself in a fresh place whenever anybody comes near. But wherever he is to-night I intend to get him."

We drank up our whisky, called the proprietor, and slipped out the back way through a dark and narrow lane that fairly stank of murder and sudden death. I felt in my pocket to make sure that my pistol was there and followed close on the heels of the other four as they quietly made their way down to the docks. Silhouettes of steamers loomed up into view, but we went on and on for half a mile until O'Reilly whispered to me that we were near the *Shropshire Siren* and must proceed cautiously.

The wind blew with stinging force. Whirlwinds of snow blew into our faces, while up above the stars gleamed brightly in the clear sky. Grayson, in charge of the expedition, had made all the plans. Instead of going straight aboard the ship —a fatal mistake in view of the German spies that hung about

the docks all hours of the night—he had a small boat in waiting at the bottom of some steps. Silently, we crept down the slime-covered way, muffled to the eyes and almost numbed with the piercing cold.

Not a sign of any human being could we see. In complete stillness the two Americans rowed us across the basin to the starboard side of a big steamer and shipped their oars beneath an iron ladder which reached down to the water. Grayson made the boat fast and then, leading the way, dexterously climbed up the ship's side. One by one we followed him. The decks were all quiet.

"There's a watchman on the other side," whispered Mortimer to me cautiously. "Take no notice of him."

The wind hummed through the ship's rigging with icy blasts that made me long for the comfort of my bed more than ever.

"Off you go," whispered the Captain. "You know the signal. Three blasts when you get him."

Taking me by the arm, O'Reilly led the way down aft, while Mortimer and Finucane made their way to the fo'ward hold. We were to take our stations below and wait, just wait, until something happened. My heart began to beat furiously.

The Captain disappeared. O'Reilly and I on tiptoe cautiously crept down to the after-hold, felt for the ladder which led to its depths, and went over, O'Reilly, another big, husky fellow, going first.

It was a nerve-racking business descending into the darkness. We dare not risk a light, but a slight grunt beneath me warned me that my companion had reached bottom. A second or two later I joined him again and he once more took me by the arm, whispering in my ear not to make a sound. We crawled over great cases that grazed our shins until eventually we reached our hiding spot where we sat down and began our vigil.

It was warm enough in the hold, too warm for our heavy coats. Besides, if the fight we expected came they would be a terrible encumbrance. Silently, I proceeded to take mine off and O'Reilly followed me.

The minutes sped by. Not a sound could be heard except the creak of the ship as she swung about in the tide. We could hear each other breathing. Occasionally, we heard a rat.

It was blacker than night and so warm that I had the greatest difficulty in keeping awake. We seemed to have been there hours, but when I pulled out my watch and had a

look at its luminous dial I was surprised to find we had been there no more than forty-five minutes.

"We want him alive," whispered O'Reilly softly. "If he comes this way I'm going to hit him with this," putting a blackjack into my hands. It was certainly a terrible weapon, a length of rubber about a foot long with a handle to it.

Hours seems to have gone by. It must have been getting close on three o'clock when suddenly we heard a noise. It seemed as though some one was feeling his way in the inky darkness of the hold. O'Reilly caught hold of my knee to warn me to silence.

Whoever it was must have knocked himself against the sharp edge of one of the cases, for we heard a muttered exclamation in German.

Silence once again. The man in the darkness, whoever he was, had evidently found the place he sought. He remained perfectly quiet for some minutes ; the only noise to be heard—and that, no doubt, was my own imagination—was the thumping of my heart. It seemed loud enough to give warning to any one so close at hand.

A slight scraping which might have been a rat trying to gnaw its way into wood. We listened intently and then, suddenly, O'Reilly, on his hands and knees, crept in the direction of the sound.

Heavens, what was that? I nearly shouted out as a ship's siren somewhere near by let off a great blast in the stillness of the night. The hooting continued. Great hoarse shrieks drowned the sound of everything that was happening around us. O'Reilly, active as a cat, grasped the opportunity like a flash. Unseen, unheard, he crawled across the hold.

Suddenly there was a flash of light and in the glare of it, bending down beneath some cases, I saw the figure of a man. It was only for a second ; there was a loud shout and then O'Reilly, like a panther leaping for its prey, made a flying leap on top of the stooping man. I heard a terrific thud and a terrible shriek of pain. Crash ! crash ! crash ! went the blackjack.

The fight was over. I picked up the electric torch O'Reilly had thrown aside and took a close look at the inert body that lay face downwards. O'Reilly, breathing heavily, slowly rose to his feet and grunted out, "That's finished him."

It certainly had. He turned the body over and by the light of the torch I saw a dark little weasel of a man, with long, dank hair, whose face shone with a death-like pallor. But what interested me more was the sight of a number of small leaden tubes, not much bigger than a fat cigar, strewn round the body.

Out of his pocket O'Reilly pulled a whistle and blew three blasts, one short and two long. They shrilled out into the night and in the space of a few seconds we heard running footsteps on the deck above. A voice, Grayson's, called out, "Is that you, O'Reilly? What's happened?"

"I've got him," shouted the Irishman, still panting. "He's down here with his bombs as well."

By the light of the torch I saw Grayson, followed by Mortimer and Finucane, climbing down the ladder that led into the hold.

"By God!" exclaimed the Captain, gazing at our capture. "You've done well." He picked up one of the tubes and looked at it with great curiosity. "So that's the little game!"

A strange bomb it was, weighing perhaps a pound. There was no way of ascertaining what it contained there and then. Nor, to judge by his face, did the Captain fancy carrying such things about with him for long. "Get up above with this fellow," he said sharply. "The sooner we bring him round and find out if there's any more of these fancy contrivances aboard the better. I hope you haven't killed him?"

"He's all right," said O'Reilly. "I've given too many of these fellows the knock-out to put them to sleep for good. A bucket of water and he'll be jumping about like a fish."

Without an effort, he hoisted the body on his back and ascended the ladder. All was quiet on deck. Not a soul, apparently, had heard a whisper of the fierce little drama that had taken place. Mortimer and Finucane picked up the bombs, put them in their pockets, and without a word being said followed their commander down the side of the ship into the boat that lay bobbing below. The herculean O'Reilly came down last, dropped his burden with a sigh of relief and sat there panting for breath while we were rowed back to the steps.

A motor-car mysteriously made its appearance the moment we reached the pavement. O'Reilly with his victim got inside, accompanied by the Captain and Finucane, while Mortimer and I got in beside the driver. No one was about; the bitter weather had sent everybody indoors for shelter and with barely a sound except the swish of the wheels through the deep snow we speeded through the dark and narrow streets into the heart of New York. All the thoroughfares were deserted; an occasional policeman patrolling his beat who took no notice of us was all we saw. The car went on to a part of New York I did not know, pulled up at a quiet house almost hidden by trees, where the Captain got out and opened the door.

O'Reilly, carrying the unconscious man like a carcase of mutton, followed him inside. Waiting until we had all entered the house, Grayson carefully shut the door behind us, switched on the hall light and then went into a large room at the back.

"Throw him down there," Grayson said to O'Reilly. That individual, whose exertions had indeed been superhuman, let his burden slide to the floor face upwards. We crowded around to look more closely.

He was not very well dressed, this scuttler of ships. His shabby clothing appeared as though it had seen many years of hard wear. But his boots were not those of a working man ; they were thin-soled. Nor did his hands betoken manual labour. Sharp of feature, now deathly pale, he lay on his back with his eyes closed, a slight heaving of the chest being the only indication that life continued within him. Grayson knelt down beside him and went through his clothing with a practised hand.

But there was nothing of any consequence to be found, no papers nor anything to give any information as to his nationality. In one of the side pockets was a big jack-knife and a box of cigarettes. The Captain pulled off the man's coat, ripped open the lining with the knife, but still found nothing. There was no belt such as might hold a clue to his identity.

"Get him upstairs to the bathroom," he said curtly. "We'll soon discover who he is."

Two of us picked the body up by the head and heels and carried it up a flight of stairs. In the bathroom the tap was turned on and our man laid under it. He came back to life with a bound ; a sudden gush and he coughed and spluttered, then gave a loud cry as his eyes opened and he saw around him five men.

"Gott!" he shrieked in a high voice. "What is this? Where am I?"

"You're all right," growled the Captain, pulling him out of the bath on to the floor. "You're in good hands."

Semi-dazed, and still only half-conscious, the prisoner was taken back into the big dining-room. O'Reilly propped him up in a chair while the Captain, pulling a brandy flask out of his pocket, forced some of the spirit down his neck. With a deep sigh, the man slowly resumed his hold of life, and as he did so one could see the fear that crept into his eyes. He gazed around at us in dazed fashion. Grayson was not minded to waste any further time on him.

"Now then," he rapped out, "what's your name, and

where did you get these things ? " pointing to the lead tubes on the floor. " What are they ? Time bombs ? "

The captive shook his head sullenly, but gave no answer.

" Quick's the word," said Grayson sharply. " You've got exactly one minute to find your tongue." He pulled out his pistol.

The inert mass in the chair glanced round at us, but could see no hope there. A tense silence followed for a few seconds. Grayson took out his watch.

" It is the Herr Doktor who is to blame," the German whined suddenly.

" The who ? " asked Grayson quickly.

" The Herr Doktor."

" I told you so," exclaimed Grayson turning to O'Reilly. " The sooner we set about him the better. Now," he said to his captive, " you'd better make up your mind to tell us all you know of the Doktor. And, mind you, if you try to lie it will go hard with you. We know all about him."

Half an hour went by. Our prisoner's name was Karl Schultz ; he had been a waiter in a Broadway restaurant until one of the German secret service agents in America had induced him to take up the work of sabotaging ships carrying cargoes to England.

He made no secret about the identity of the man who was making these bombs, a German chemist named Scheele, who had apparently been financed in a big way. Schultz himself was paid so much for every ship on which he could plant the bombs, with a further reward of 5,000 dollars for every one that disappeared. A pretty business indeed ! I wondered how many unfortunate sailormen had lost their lives in consequence.

" Well," said Grayson, when he had heard all that the panic-stricken man had to tell, " it's no use wasting any more time over him. Take him back to the ship," he ordered O'Reilly, " and make him show you where he has put the rest of his fireworks. You know what to do with him if he makes any trouble. And when you've finished with him shove him inside until we're ready for him."

O'Reilly and Finucane went off with their prisoner. It was still dark and the Captain sat without speaking for some little time. I was curious to know what the bombs contained, but I had to wait for two or three hours. In the meantime, a servant brought us something to eat.

The telephone bell in the hall rang. Grayson answered it himself and I could hear him saying to the caller, " It's all

O.K. Come round as soon as you can and bring your tools with you."

"What's up?" I asked him.

"Wait and see. We're going to show you the secret of the ships that have sailed from here and never been heard of again."

There was a ring at the front door. The servant brought in a professional-looking man with a leather bag.

"Take a glance at these," remarked Grayson, handing over one of the cigars. Our expert turned it over and over. "H'm, just as I thought. It struck me all along that they were using something like this. Two acids, I expect. I'll soon tell you."

He took a small saw out of his bag, cut the tube through, and poured out two yellowish-looking powders which he smelt with great curiosity.

"Picric and sulphuric acids," he said. "And you see this copper disc in the middle? In about a week or ten days these two acids would have eaten through it, and set fire to each other. Then you would get a fire that would burn for hours unless you caught it straight away. Once it started in a hold of a ship it would spread like lightning. The flames would shoot out of either end, melt the lead, and make a blaze that would leave no trace."

"You'd better take them away with you," said Grayson. "We don't want any fires here."

"I guess not, Captain. Well, I'll be on my way. If there is anything more you want me for, you know where to find me."

I followed shortly afterwards, still feeling somewhat dazed. As Grayson bade me good-bye at the front door, he said, "When you get home, you can tell the people in England there won't be so many ships vanishing in the future. By the time O'Reilly has done with his man, and I've had an interview or two with the Herr Doktor, I think the fire-bug business will be out of date."

And true enough it was. When I reached home again I heard that the estimable Doktor Scheele had been arrested by Federal agents, and to save his own skin had confessed the full details of the plot that had threatened to cut off a full half of the Allies supplies.

Captain von Rintelen had already gone back to Germany. One day in New York, a message reached him from Boy-Ed, the naval attaché, making an appointment in the street. Matters were then at the stage that the German official

representatives were afraid to meet him openly. Rintelen met Boy-Ed, who handed him a communication which said, "Inform Rintelen unobtrusively that he is to return at once."

The naval attaché was no friend of his. However, he had no option but to obey the order ; in the name of Emil Gasche, he boarded a Dutch steamer bound for Rotterdam. But he never reached the Fatherland. On arriving in English waters, a Boarding Officer subjected him to a drastic interrogation, which Rintelen withstood fairly successfully, only to be given away, when all seemed well, by a fellow-passenger.

He was taken ashore, and eventually found himself at the Admiralty in Whitehall, where the formidable Captain Hall taxed him with his proper identity. Rintelen would not admit it. For a time, he thought he had bluffed his way through. Then, alas, inquiries were set on foot about the Swiss passport he carried. There was another interview at the Admiralty at which he was forced to confess that he was not Emil Gasche but Captain Franz von Rintelen. Within 48 hours he was a prisoner of war at Donnington Hall, where he remained until the United States came into the war.

He could not believe his ears when he was informed that he would be sent back to America on charges of violating the neutrality laws. But it proved all too true. Back he went, to spend many wearisome months in the Tombs prison before he was finally tried with many of his confederates, and sentenced to four years in the terrible penitentiary of Atalanta.

How had his capture come about in the first place ? Who had given him away ? Boy-Ed or Von Papen ? It was not until he had regained his freedom that he discovered how the clever Captain Hall, who was in possession of the secret code of the German Embassy, *had sent a spoof message through from England, ordering his return*, and had captured him as he reached British waters.

ALL FOR THE LOVE OF A WOMAN

By

S. T. FELSTEAD

NEARLY a hundred years have elapsed since the bad old days when England transported her convicts to Australia and Van Dieman's Land. But the system still obtains in France. Year after year thousands of malefactors are sent out to that terrible penal settlement in Guiana. The fate of these ordinary criminals is bad enough ; but the fate of the political offender, the man who has turned traitor to his country, is one that must surely cause any would-be renegade to pause before embarking on any act of treachery.

In the year 1908 there was stationed at the French naval port of Toulon, the base of the Mediterranean Fleet, a young lieutenant of Jewish extraction named Benjamin Ullmo. His fellow-officers found him moody, irritable, quickly roused to anger and inclined to be unsociable. His chronic impecuniosity also made him unwilling to mix with other men, so that one way and another, he was decidedly unpopular.

Ullmo was an officer on the torpedo boat *Carabine* and in a weak moment, when on a visit to Marseilles, he became infatuated with a Syrian dancer who called herself " La Belle Lison." It will do the lady no injustice to say that her mental abilities were by no means on a par with her physical charms. Nevertheless, Ullmo grew madly in love with her, and finding her not unwilling to be the inamorata of a French officer, he embarked on a liaison which, had he but known it, was destined to bring appalling consequences for him in its trail.

" La Belle Lison " was expensive, but Ullmo uncompromisingly declined her suggestion that he might share her charms with some of his friends. He took her with him when he was sent to Algeria, at which period she began to guess that her lover was growing short of money.

After some months, Ullmo had reached the stage when he was taking opium to forget the troubles that were slowly but surely encompassing him. He had also started to gamble with disastrous results until, in desperation, he began racking his brains for ways and means of getting money.

Then "La Belle" revealed herself; she knew some one in Brussels willing to pay substantial sums for confidential information about French naval matters. There was little or no risk; all he had to do was to write to a certain address, to some one who would accept her word that Ullmo was a man to be trusted. Gradually, then, it started. From time to time Ullmo received a little money, but not sufficient to satisfy the inordinate demands the lady made upon him. Little by little the idea came to him that he would get hold of something really worth while, and then disappear. He knew, too well, that the woman was now in a position to ruin him any time she chose.

"One grand *coup*," he said to himself, "and I am finished with this business for ever more."

The result of his deliberations were set down in the form of a letter which he dispatched to the Secretary of the Navy in Paris—a communication serious enough when one considers the friction that existed between France and Germany at the time.

> "I am going," said Ullmo, who gave no indication of his identity, "to sell the naval signalling code to the German secret service unless the government will agree to pay me the sum of 500,000 francs (a matter of £20,000). My buyer is waiting, but I shall give the government the first opportunity. If you wish to deal with me you are to advertise in the personal column of *Le Journal*, using the *nom de plume* of B99. At the slightest sign of treachery all negotiations will be at an end."

There could be but one answer to such a communication. Within a few minutes one of the leading officers of the Sûreté Générale arrived at the Secretary's office.

"Yes," he said at length. "It may be the letter of a lunatic. How would it be, monsieur, to ignore it and see what happens? I am of the opinion that it is nothing more than blackmail."

"We cannot take that risk," snapped the harassed Secretary, "if this man has got the code we must get it back somehow. He must be trapped, and I think it will be better to advertise in *Le Journal* as he requests. I dread to think what may happen if this code should reach Germany."

For weeks the traitor corresponded through the columns of the paper without disclosing his identity. His replies reached *Le Journal* through the post, and were inserted, by arrangement with the police, in the hope that some slip might unmask the traitor.

In the meantime there was taking place a frantic call-in of all the signalling code books. As the Secretary said, it was impossible to change the code, for there were many ships abroad, and until they returned to their base nothing could be done.

The bargaining and bickering went on—an astounding example of impudence and helplessness—until the Secretary began to grow frightened.

" We shall offer to pay the money," he said to the detective. " It will then rest with you to catch this villain."

The blackmailer advertised : " Leave money in packet in *toilette* Avignon train departing Paris 11 a.m., just before train reaches Avignon. Will collect money and leave code behind."

The arrangement was a perfectly simple one. The traitor should enter the apartment for the ostensible purpose of washing himself, there to make the pleasant discovery that some one had left half a million francs behind.

The police, for their part, were to follow, and to pick up the Navy's long-lost secret signalling code. Nothing could have been more beautifully simple.

When the *rapide* pulled out from Paris on the all-important day en route to the City of the Popes every passenger was scrutinised, but there was no obvious suspect and so the detectives could do nothing but place the money in the *toilette* and await developments.

In a way, the situation was laughable. There were three officers from the Sûreté, watching with cat-like intensity a *cabinet de toilette* on a railway train in which there lay a little fortune—at that time—of 500,000 francs. True, the money was all in brand-new banknotes, the numbers of which had already been carefully noted, and any attempt to cash them would have brought swift retribution.

Just before the train reached its destination a little man walked in, quite oblivious of the drama that was being staged.

The police gave him no chance to elude them. Like a flash, they followed him in, grabbed him by the scruff of the neck, picked up their money, and had him out on the platform all in the space of ten seconds. He protested mightily, but without giving him breath to answer they told him they were police officers and that they intended to question him on a very important matter.

" What is the meaning of this outrage ? " he demanded angrily when eventually he found himself in the waiting-room with the door locked. " Cannot I wash myself without being pounced upon by policemen ? "

"It is all right," he was informed, "we have been waiting for you quite a long time."

"For me?" echoed the captive.

He was a stout, prosperous-looking fellow, middle-aged and, it must be confessed, not in the least the type one would have imagined to be selling naval secrets.

"You will be searched," the detectives informed him. "If you are not the man we want you will receive an apology; if you are, no apology will be needed."

But the detectives found, not the missing code, but a *carte d'identitie* and papers which seemed to suggest that their prisoner was the French Consul of Odessa! The situation was explained and the Consul told that he would have to be detained in custody until his bona fides had been verified.

The captive, it seems, had been enjoying a holiday in his native land, but beyond gambling at Monte Carlo and losing more than was good for him, he had done nothing to justify any suspicion of traitorous work.

They were a long time in the waiting-room. Ultimately the door was unlocked and they moved out on to the station platform to continue the discussion, which was then becoming a trifle acrimonious.

They were standing on the platform, the Consul and the detectives, still calling each other names. The place was practically deserted except for a dapper little fellow standing some yards away, evidently listening with the greatest interest to the argument. His curiosity, in fact, savoured of impertinence. To the surprise of the detectives, he came over and spoke to them.

"I was wondering," he remarked insolently, "why you are arresting that man."

"What business is it of yours?" he was asked.

The little man smiled.

"Oh, none at all," he explained deprecatingly. "But I was a passenger on the train and had a talk with your prisoner as we left Paris. It appears very strange that he should be arrested."

"Then you had better keep your thoughts to yourself," one of the detectives cried, more exasperated than ever. "Be off about your own affairs or you'll be sorry."

They were feeling very sorry for themselves. All their carefully-laid schemes had gone astray! The inquisitive one said nothing more and walked off, but the detectives did not feel altogether satisfied. One of them was instructed to follow the man, while recriminations were still going on between the Consul and the remaining detectives. They were still at it

when the subordinate returned. He had detained the little man and ordered him to produce his papers.

"He is nothing to worry about," said the police officer, without going into details, and for the time nothing further was done.

The three detectives made the journey back to Paris more angry than ever. Their reception at police headquarters was not the appreciative one they had hoped for.

"Ah," remarked the Secretary of the Navy, "so you have failed, as I expected. The traitor was too cunning for you, eh?"

Would the code now find its way to Berlin? The Secretary seemed to think it would, but the Sûreté officers doubted it.

They were not mistaken. Shortly afterwards, the traitor wrote to the Navy again, and one must admit that he was sufficiently tactful not to refer to what had already happened. Instead, he requested that the authorities should send a representative to Toulon on a certain date and to be indoors at noon in a certain room when he, the writer, would telephone and make an appointment to hand over the code in exchange for the money at 3 p.m. that day.

Once more the Sûreté got busy, and three detectives were sent to Toulon. At 11.50 a.m. that morning all telephonic communication in the town had been stopped. Any person who spoke after that time could be traced beyond all doubt.

It must have been just a minute or two on 12 o'clock when the thrill came. Some one—a man—speaking from the Brasserie de Strasbourg, called for the number of the Grand Hotel and asked to speak to the occupant of Room 38.

An exciting moment or two! The caller was kept waiting for a reply while like a flash two of the detectives jumped into a motor-car and were driven like fury to the Brasserie. But as quick as they were, the fox had gone to earth. There had been some one speaking on the telephone, the waiter informed them, but he had received his reply and had gone off.

They were baulked for the time being, but another officer who came hurrying along from the Grand Hotel brought news that once more aroused their hope. The mysterious speaker had fixed an appointment for 3 p.m. at Ollioules, close to Toulon. The rendezvous should be a certain stone on which was marked the distance to the city.

His latest proposal was that a single emissary of the Government should carry the money with him and wait on the lonely road while he, the possessor of the code, would come along in a motor-car and hand over the code in exchange for the money. A clever plan. The stretch of road designated

by him was so straight and unfrequented that he could watch for an ambush without the slightest trouble.

The police predicament was the risk attendant on stopping any automobile that came along. If the wrong one was pulled up the traitor would know beyond all doubt that the police were on his track. Also, short of stationing local officers around all the exits of Toulon, it was impossible to stop cars from using the road.

No mistakes were meant to be made this time, but it was difficult to devise a plan to meet the situation without fear of failure. Eventually it was decided to chance to luck. A naval officer from Toulon whom the police pressed into service was instructed to station himself at the meeting-place with the money in his possession, while the detectives hid themselves close by. They meant to take a chance ; it would be strange if the transaction did not take long enough to enable them to capture the criminal. If the worst came to the worst, he would be shot dead.

It was a breathless, memorable afternoon those detectives spent on the Toulon road awaiting the dénouement. Sulzbach, the decoy bird, walked up and down with a huge wad of banknotes in his possession. An automobile was heard in the distance and everybody prepared for action. But it flashed by and disappeared up the road.

Another came whizzing by—and still another. All the automobiles in Toulon seemed to be passing that way that afternoon ! What had happened to their man ?

The police were concealed some little distance on the Toulon side of the rendezvous. Suddenly, just as they were beginning to despair of anything turning up, a car came slowly by.

Whom did it contain ? The driver was no other than the inquisitive little individual who had been ordered about his business.

The car passed on and stopped at the meeting-place. The little man got out as Sulzbach walked up, said something to him which the waiting detectives could not hear and then, like thunderbolts, they were upon him. His clothing was searched while he struggled like a wild cat to free himself. Panting, the coat torn off his back, he was thrown on the ground and handcuffed while, from an inner pocket, the missing code was extracted.

One might have thought in such a case that any intelligent man would have refrained from carrying with him any evidence of his real identity. But no ; his cunning went deeper than that. His papers proved him to be a Lieut. Ullmo of the torpedo-boat service.

"You shall suffer heavily for this treatment," he exclaimed with great fury. "I am a naval officer and I have every right to carry the code with me."

"That may be," he was sternly told. "But you are not entitled to try and sell it. You know what high treason is as well as we do."

For the time Ullmo persisted in declaring his complete innocence. It was useless arguing with him. Beyond informing him point-blank that some one had made a rendezvous for that very spot that afternoon to hand over the code in return for half a million francs, he was told nothing further. He was placed in the back of his own car, still handcuffed, driven back to Toulon, and locked in a cell.

The fear of the unknown soon began to play on his opium-ridden constitution. After a week's captivity, he sent for the police and told the whole wretched story—his infatuation for "La Belle Lison," the growing burden of debt, the desperate attempts to raise money, and finally, the whisper that funds could be raised by selling secrets to Germany.

For a time at least, probably hoping his punishment might be mitigated if he was proved to have done nothing more than blackmail his own people, he would admit no connection with the German secret service. "La Belle Lison" had vanished, but, alas for Ullmo, there were a good many of his fellow-officers who remembered her. Step by step she was traced through to Theisen, the notorious German agent, and the Sûreté officers then began an investigation of telegraph messages which might have been sent by their prisoner to one of Theisen's numerous addresses.

They found one, by a curious coincidence. Ullmo, telegraphing to Berlin asking a price for something he had to sell, had inadvertently signed his proper name instead of the alias Durant he had been adopting in his traitorous work.

Now that he was doomed, it became a question of discovering what damage he had done. He was transferred to a prison in Paris, there to undergo long interrogations by naval officers who told him that his only hope of avoiding death lay in revealing the entire truth. Ullmo was in no physical state to resist. His health broken by opium-smoking, his courage completely gone, he lay in confinement for three long and weary months before being brought to trial before a naval court martial at Toulon.

Then the police found "La Belle Lison." She was taken to see her erstwhile lover, but beyond informing him that she had already forgotten him, she made no admissions that would help the unfortunate Ullmo in his defence.

". . . like a thunderbolt they were upon him. His clothing was searched while he struggled like a wild cat to free himself. Panting, he was thrown to the ground and handcuffed.

"I know nothing of this man, Theisen you call him," she declared to the police. "Ullmo is lying."

There was no proof against her. Nothing but Ullmo's word. Thankfully enough he saw the last of his mistress and composed himself as best he could to the horrors that lay before him.

He appeared before the court martial charged with high treason, certain to be found guilty owing to the admissions he had made about communicating with German agents in Brussels and Berlin. Nor, to give him his due, did he attempt any justification of his actions. When ordered to plead his guilt or otherwise, all he would say was, "I do not deny what I have done. Name the price and I will pay it."

"La Belle Lison" gave evidence of her association with him. Cold-bloodedly she related how poor Ullmo had spent big sums of money on her, money which must have been far more than his pay; how he had told her from time to time when she questioned him that he had other resources, and her final decision to leave him when she suspected that he was selling his country.

Ullmo listened to the female Judas with resignation, his mind filled with the unspeakable relief of knowing she could do him no further harm. All that interested him now was the sentence—death, or transportation for life to Devil's Island. In three days' time he knew his fate; he was to go to the Island of the Damned, the self-same place that Captain Dreyfus had gone to fifteen years previously, for the rest of his life.

But before that took place there was a formality to undergo—public degradation. In full view of the populace of Toulon he was to stand up, a condemned traitor, to have the epaulettes and buttons cut from his uniform while his sentence was read out, and then, as a final gesture that he had dishonoured his oath to the French Republic, to have his sword broken across the knee of his commanding officer.

With downcast eyes, the picture of a man to whom all hope is lost, Ullmo was led out to the barrack square, to hear the words that made him an outcast for evermore. He was now nothing but a shattered apology of a man whose dissipations had brought him to the verge of collapse.

The ceremony was short. Ullmo stood in the centre of the square, heard himself sentenced to deportation, followed by the sharp order of degradation. The naval guard closed around him and he was marched back to prison. There he was attired in civilian clothing and removed to the State prison awaiting dispatch to La Rochelle, where he would join the next convict ship bound for the penal settlement at Cayenne.

Ullmo, by his own accounts, settled down in Captain Dreyfus's old hut and soon became a model prisoner. The Great War came and went. He made application to the authorities to go back to France and serve in the trenches, but all in vain. Letters came occasionally ; his family were making unending efforts to obtain a commutation of his sentence.

Time after time the pleas were rejected ; it seemed that Ullmo was doomed to spend the rest of his life as a prisoner.

At the end of fifteen years he succeeded in obtaining partial release. He was permitted to take up residence in Cayenne itself, on a sort of parole which enabled him to find employment and occupy a house of his own. He married a native woman, and he might have settled down in the capital of French Guiana for the rest of his life had there not appeared in a Paris paper, twenty-five years after he had been transported, a pathetic story of the naval lieutenant Ullmo who, all for the love of a woman, had wrecked his career in 1908.

It was just at the time when an agitation sprung up in France to put an end to the dreadful life that French convicts were undergoing in the settlement. Ullmo's case in particular aroused the pity of a nurse in Paris named Madeleine Poirier, a middle-aged woman who made a vow that she would effect his release.

She went out to Cayenne, saw him, and then came back to Paris to intercede with influential friends to allow him to return to his native land. With unwearying persistency, she badgered the authorities to pardon him. Twenty-six years after Ullmo had been condemned, he boarded a steamer at Cayenne a free man, to return to France in an attempt to pick up the threads of a life which had come to an end such a long time ago.

It was too late. All his relatives had disappeared, or, if there were any living, they wanted nothing to do with him. Paris was agog with stories of the romance awaiting him in the shape of marriage to the faithful Mlle. Poirier. But Ullmo soon discovered that he could be nothing more than an outcast for the remainder of his existence. He could find no employment, he could not reconcile himself to the thought of trying to settle down, even at the side of a woman who loved him, in the country where he would everlastingly be pointed out as a traitor.

For six months he remained in Paris, with Cayenne and the native woman he had left there, perpetually calling him. To Mlle. Poirier he said that he would go back and spend the rest of his life working for the betterment of his fellow-prisoners.

There was an affecting farewell between the couple on the quay at Bordeaux when Ullmo finally said good-bye to the land of his birth. Mlle. Poirier, with tears in her eyes, blindly waved a wet handkerchief as the ship slowly moved out to sea, carrying with it the man who had paid as heavy a price for a crime as the world has ever known.

ESPIONAGE BY AEROPLANE

By

EDWIN T. WOODHALL

UPON the Western Front, the airmen of the Allied forces accomplished feats of incredible daring and skill in the perilous duty of Special Mission by aeroplane, or spy dropping.

The French aviators were the star performers, and some of the best were Vedrines, Navarre, Captain de Rose (the handsomest man I have ever seen in my life), Lieut, Quillance, Captain Evant, Captain de Beauchamp, Adjutant Paolacca, Sergeant Pierre Bourdet, George and Valentin Bourdet, his brothers, and the great "ace" of war pilots, Gunemeyer.

Gunemeyer, hero of 53 aerial combats, undertook many Special Missions of this description. So daring did he become that the enemy placed a special price upon his head *dead or alive*.

Upon one occasion he had a very narrow escape near Vervins. He was dropping a local schoolmaster (who was tracked and shot by the enemy three days afterwards) when he noticed two agreeable spots for landing.

One particular field was an ideal landing-place for any aviator. The other was not too good, being bumpy and interspersed with small hillocks.

He was about to come down on to the lovely green field when his eyes caught sight of a network of gleaming, taut, trap wires. He was just in time to skim over and taxi on to the bumpy ground. The Germans had evidently anticipated such a thing happening, and had planned a reception for any aviator landing unknown to their vigilance.

Vedrines landed a French soldier near Rethel, the object being to watch trains, food supplies, and general convoys. The unfortunate spy visited his wife and was shortly afterwards denounced and shot.

Lieutenant Navarre dropped a daring French soldier disguised as a peasant named Bordes. This spy remained in German conquered territory for nearly a month, subsequently reaching the Dutch frontier and back to freedom.

When he was dropped near Mézières he had in his inside

waistcoat deep, specially cut pockets in which were carrier pigeons.

Always upon his march through the enemy lines and villages he had his small, feathered pals with him. One little hen named Pauline would coo incessantly. That would start the other pigeon, Victor. Many a time they made him terrified of discovery.

As soon as he caught sight of an individual he used to cough and sneeze. After a time, his throat became quite sore through this ruse, so he would tap lightly with his elbows on the little pigeons' heads as a command to keep quiet.

" My instructions were to obtain information about the bridge between Mézières and Charleville," Bordes told me. " After I had obtained it I was going to release Pauline—she was too dangerous !

" I reached the bridge and watched the German guard at each end examining the papers of all civilians. After about an hour of observation, I made up my mind to put all to the hazard, and advanced towards the nearest German sentry. I had picked the feeding time of the Boches. With the exception of two, all who had been standing near the bridge entrance were inside the hut.

" I met the eyes of the German ; his comrade was examining the papers of a carter whom I had purposely followed. My sentry asked me a few questions in broken French, and being satisfied, handed me my papers. I walked off. Hardly had I got a few feet on to the bridge than Pauline *started to coo* !

" With a smart tap of my elbow, my heart in my mouth at the same time, I walked over the bridge crowded with German soldiers, sneezing and coughing until tears came in my eyes. Pauline, to my over-sensitive mind, was cooing all the time !

" How I escaped detection with that beautiful bird I do not know. At dawn next morning, with the information round her legs, I kissed her pretty head and let her go. She was, oh, so lovable ! But like all the ladies, dangerous !

" I sent Victor back near Brussels. Both got back to their Army lofts, and so did I to my Depot, some twenty-five days later."

Bordes' comrade tried to emulate the success of his friend and was dropped near the Belgian town of Charleroi. He made for his native town to see his fiancée—ignoring his comrade's advice to *trust nobody*. He met the fate of a spy at the hands of a German firing squad almost within sight of his own home.

In regard to aviators caught dropping spies, if detected, they, too, suffered a spy's death. A French pilot, in uniform, named Paolacca, took over in his machine a brother colleague disguised as a French civilian. Unfortunately, the plane fell into a barrage which damaged some part of the engine, and they were forced to descend.

Steering as best he could for a wooded part of the landscape, Paolacca brought his machine down with safety.

Bidding his companion to *bolt for his life*, they shook hands and parted, the disguised soldier spy plunging into the woods, while the other, in uniform, stood placidly by his machine.

Nor was their parting a moment too soon. Hostile eyes had followed their descent, and a large car, packed with Germans, dashed round the bend of the road towards him.

The aviator was at once taken prisoner, and conveyed to German Army Headquarters. For some time he was subjected in French to a fierce interrogation, questions being rained upon him.

Where have you come from? What is your unit? Where were you going and for what purpose? Where is your passenger? Why did he leave you? and several other questions.

All of which he parried, his object being to save his companion and to gain time. The Germans, however, were suspicious, and seeing they could not wring the information from him that they wanted, he was led out and placed in a lonely cell under a strong, armed guard.

For three days, with the exception of about half an hour each day for exercise, he was kept in close confinement.

Then, on the morning of the third day, he was again led before his interrogators. At once, a question was hurled at him.

"You know the fate of any French or British aviator who drops a spy behind our lines?"

"Yes!—death. If you can prove it!"

"Well, it might interest you to know that we shot your fellow passenger this morning as a spy."

"Oh, is that so."

"Yes—what is more, he confessed to your bringing him over."

But Palocca's intuition told him the Germans were bluffing.

He knew the character of the spy he had dropped. He knew that even if he had been caught his colleague would have died before betraying him.

From this moment he stood his ground, giving no informa-

tion, and expecting the worst. After three hours further examination he was led out once more to his cell. The same thing happened each morning throughout the week.

At last he was led in for sentence.

"You have been tried by German Military Tribunal, and found guilty of 'aiding espionage.' You will be shot at dawn."

The gallant fellow heard his sentence without flinching. Focussed upon his face were crowds of enemy eyes watching every movement of his expression and features, in the hope of detecting some evidence of guilt.

This son of France, however, betrayed no emotion. His reply came with characteristic fortitude and heroism.

"Vive la France! Vivent les Allies!" (Long live France. Long live the Allies).

At midnight he was awakened by a German officer of the guard, and informed that his sentence had been commuted to one of penal servitude for life.

He was sent into Germany to a prison camp near Lechfeld, and by some means he bribed a sentry to procure him an enemy uniform. One day, disguised as a German non-commissioned officer, this daring spy led out, past the guard, a party of seven other French soldiers.

After about twelve days, the little party of eight passed over the Swiss frontier at Thayingen to freedom.

. . . .

Early in 1915 I was called by my Chief of Intelligence to undertake a certain mission.

"You will proceed by car to a point on the map marked B.4.12 at nine p.m. to-night. At this spot you will see a civilian waiting. You will stop the car and say in French, 'Par Avion.' He will answer, 'Mission Spéciale.'

"That will be your man. You will take him up in the car, and you will proceed to a spot marked on the map H.9.12. You will alight, and pass on to a field at the rear of 'Streaky Bacon Farm.' About three hundred yards due west from this place you will come across an aeroplane.

"You will see the pilot and say in English, 'By Aeroplane.' His answer will be 'Special Messenger Intelligence.'

"These are your orders and passwords. You will ask no questions of either party, and you will return and report to me."

I carried out my orders as directed. Strangely enough, at the time I thought nothing of it. I recall meeting the civilian, all wrapped up, with a curious *hump* upon his shoulders.

I learned later that the physical peculiarity was due to a basket of carrier pigeons strapped to his shoulders under his loose-fitting raincoat, tightened at the waist by his belt. The man climbed into the aeroplane, the engines started, the plane moved away and went soaring up and off into the darkness.

It was only in after years that this isolated war-time episode was brought back to my mind by hearing that the Germans had shot the famous X——, a Belgian, and one of our most trusted secret service agents, who had done much valuable work for the Allies.

During 1916, it was my lot to meet the particular Intelligence Officer who had given me the order on that early war night in 1915.

He told me that X—— had at last been caught by the enemy. "Brave fellow," he said. "Sent back some marvellous information; risked his life over and over again."

"Of whom are you talking?" I asked.

"Why, surely you know?" he answered. Then he recalled the incident I have just related.

"How did you expect me to know? Your orders were—to ask no questions," I said.

"Quite right, Woodhall. I forgot," he said.

Then he enlightened me on the true facts. The civilian I had met that night was the hero in question. The Belgian soldier had volunteered to go over the enemy lines and be dropped by parachute from an aeroplane. Once over, he would go to friends and spy upon the German Military arrangements, sending back the information by carrier pigeons to our Intelligence.

From time to time, at night, specially deputed airmen would fly over, land at a secret spot, pick him up and return.

He had been engaged in this hazardous business for about two years until at last he was caught and paid the penalty.

His death, no doubt, is summed up by the following notice displayed upon the walls of Brussels, no uncommon thing during the period of *German occupation.*

NOTICE

PIERRE-JOSEPH CLAES

of

Belgian nationality, born May 8th, 1887, at Schaerbeeck, near Brussels, has been condemned to death for espionage. Claes had admitted that in his quality of Belgian soldier

he had come into Belgium in civilian clothes for the purpose of spying. The condemned man was shot to-day.

THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF LIMBOURG.

BRUSSELS. *Oct. 12th, 1915.*

KEIM, *Major-General, General Government. Imperial German Army of Military Occupation.*

Now for an episode of the Austro-Italian front.

One of Italy's bravest spies was Lieutenant Alessandro Tandura. His personal description, by a man who knew him, gives an idea of the type of messenger he was.

"Our spy had arrived, one Allessandro Tandura, no curly-headed, blue-eyed hero to look at, but rather undersized, and dark, with the curious close-knit, hard bitten, almost deformed appearance which belongs to the mountaineering class. Yet he was by far the *bravest man I have ever known.* Even his early career with the Army proves his courage. He was a volunteer almost immediately Italy joined in the war.

"In July, 1915, he was wounded and declared permanently disabled, but he 'wangled' himself into the Army again as a private in the Machine Gun Corps, not exactly a *safe job.*

"A year later, in July, 1916, he was wounded a second time, and given a commission as Lieutenant. The next year he was wounded for the third time, and ordered a year of convalescence. His reply was to work his passage somehow into the trenches, where every one was welcome after the disaster of Capirette."

In the case with which this story deals Tandura was to be dropped behind the Austrian lines by those two intrepid English aviators, Captain Wedgwood Benn, D.S.O., and Colonel Barker, V.C.

He was taken to a hut, and the slings of the parachute fixed. His peasant clothes were put in his knapsack, and his spade with which to bury his incriminating belongings was strapped on him in such a way that it would not, in the swift descent, fly up and stun him.

"How do you feel, Tandura ?" from the Captain.

"Benessimo, Signor Capitano."

Farewells were drowned as the engines were started up and the machine rumbled across the field and took to the air.

The night was pitch dark, and after a short time they flew into a heavy storm, vivid lightning showing up the country below in detail.

The night was inky black, greatly to their advantage.

They crossed the Piave River. An iron frame was lowered so that the parachute with its launching disc and case were fixed several feet below the wheels of the under-carriage. This frame was lowered by a tackle and went down pulling hard as the wind caught it and creating a fierce pressure.

Everything was ready. The aeroplane hummed over the town which was its landmark; the Austrian searchlights flickered ominously below.

Colonel Barker made the signal to Captain Wedgwood Benn, with his foot, that he was ready. The Captain sat down on the two bombs they were carrying, with his hand on the thick ash handle which, by means of a long wire, controlled the bolt under Tandura's seat. Tandura himself sat on two miniature trap doors.

The Colonel pressed the Captain's foot. He pulled the handle! The machine shivered and resumed its course.

A hurried glimpse through the black void in the floor of the aeroplane. A momentary glimpse of a small black sphere flying past behind them—that was all. For good or ill, *Tandura was gone.* The two British officers returned to their base.

Some few days later a message came in from Tandura and the two Englishmen heaved a sigh of relief.

After the war he recounted his adventure. Tandura said that in the dark he must have dozed off to sleep, and at about 10,000 feet he suddenly felt his whole inside come up, as it were, in his mouth. He was falling.

"Suddenly, I remember opening my eyes," he said. "I had the impression I was buoyant and floating—and I seemed to be going back to the aeroplane. *Then I knew the parachute had opened.*

"I screwed up courage and looked down. By the intermittent lightning flashes I could see the countryside. Was I seen? Would I fall into enemy hands? A sudden squall of rain and wind buffeted me cruelly. My body on the strap was swinging like a pendulum. I had a sense of absolute helplessness. I was impotent—powerless.

"Suddenly there was a numb feeling of pain in my legs. I had struck a low brick wall adjoining some farm property. On, on, the storm carried me, when it seemed that the *earth sprang up and hit me.* I had struck, with the full force of my

body, a large vine hedge. I was knocked absolutely sick."

. . . .

Tandura must have lain many hours in the pouring rain. He was completely stunned. The storm nearly killed him, but it also saved his life, for little watch was being kept by the enemy outpost near which he fell.

Tandura changed from his officer's clothes into the disguise of an Italian peasant, and buried his uniform and parachute as quickly as possible.

A river was close at hand. But owing to his exhausted state and the swollen water he nearly lost his life in trying to swim across.

He then sought refuge in the cottage of a peasant woman who gave him food and hiding. Two days afterwards he went to a spot upon the map where his signal was agreed to be shown. He tried several times to communicate with our aeroplanes, but failed.

This sort of thing went on for days. Friends were trying all the time to communicate with him, but it was too risky for Tandura to signal his presence.

At last one of our aeroplanes dropped a bag of food and a carrier pigeon, which faithful friends delivered into the spy's keeping.

By this time he had valuable and important information to communicate, which he immediately sent off to Italian headquarters by the carrier pigeon.

Again loyal and brave friends found another pigeon that had been dropped by the English aviators, and more information was dispatched, the result of which led to the battle of Vittorio.

From August to September, 1918, he took his life daily in his hands. He was arrested upon two occasions by Austrian gendarmes, but escaped each time.

Upon the third and last occasion he nearly met his fate. An aeroplane dropped a message for "The Lone Wolf." It was brought to Tandura. It gave him instructions to proceed to a certain little field near his native town of Serra ville, where an aeroplane would pick him up at a given point at a given time.

Unfortunately, he went to say good-bye to some of his friends and was pounced upon by the Austrian Intelligence Police and taken to their headquarters.

They attached no *importance* to him, thinking he was what he told them, an *escaped Italian prisoner*.

From this time onwards he lived in captivity, but towards the end of October escaped once again.

Hunted, and half starved, he remained in hiding, getting food here and there from the loyal peasant people who knew his mission. Further, he started to organise a guerilla band of escaped Italian prisoners. His object was to raid and put to death any Austrian Headquarters Staff found on Italian soil.

In this project, however, Fate intervened. The Italian offensive started, the victorious forces swept through, and he and his comrades were saved.

MADEMOISELLE LE DOCTEUR

By

R. W. ROWAN

THERE was at least one woman connected with the German secret service during the World War whose value to her government surely surpassed that of a division of fighting men. The French, who were her chief adversaries, began calling her *Mademoiselle le Docteur*; and, though her activities are now history and her ruthlessness a grim legend, only by that curious title is she known to this day. She came to be the directing genius of the German secret service headquarters that had moved from Brussels—where it had flourished under Cuers and Thiesen for many years before the war—to Antwerp after the capture of that city on October 9th, 1914. She was there in charge of German espionage in what is known as the Zone of the Interior, which, in time of war, is that portion of a combatant country which lies well behind the fighting front. Thus, to the Allies, all of Germany was a zone of the interior during the World War. And *Mademoiselle le Docteur* was responsibly in charge of a corps of agents who gathered military and naval intelligence and all manner of information in those departments of France lying beyond an imaginary line which may be drawn from Boulogne to Paris, to Épinal, Belfort, and the Swiss frontier.

Great Britain, from Cornwall to the secret naval bases in the north, was another zone of the interior, and the spies controlled by the woman in Antwerp were also aimed in that direction. But much spying upon the British was manipulated from Amsterdam, from Scandinavian cities, and directly from the German secret service headquarters in Charlottenburg. To complete the picture it may be added that the Mediterranean espionage of the Germans was directed from Barcelona and Madrid, in close accord with Antwerp, while German espionage in the Zone of Combat, which comprised the military sectors directly behind the trench lines from the Yser to the Vosges in Alsace, was controlled in the main by spy-masters located in Berne and other Swiss centres.

Mademoiselle le Docteur not only recruited and trained spies and sent them on their secret missions, a momentous job for man or woman, but also she devised new methods for their use and a new manner of operating a corps of agents. She put her individual stamp upon every one of them that set forth from the Antwerp headquarters. Intelligent, clever,

intrepid, efficient, she was also terribly feared, and seems to have dominated all with whom she came into contact in her work, whether officer and nobleman, renegade, dupe, or common informer.

She arrived in Antwerp on a confidential mission soon after the German administrative forces had followed the army into the city. Possibly from the first she was clothed with some formidable authority, for the men of the secret service deferred to her even before they feared her. French and Belgian agents sent to watch over her say that she was neither young nor personable, though some professed to note indications of former beauty ; but if Mata-Hari was the Eye of the Morning, the reputation of *Mademoiselle le Docteur* would translate her name to Tiger Eyes. None who ever saw her omits mention of her curious optical distinction ; she dominated with a glance, and her directional characteristics of boldness and ferocity were easily to be read in the flashing, frigid blue of her eyes. Among the renegade agents and spies and informers whom she ordered about, she let it be rumoured that she had a *von* to her name and concealed her aristocracy for the duration of the war. That German spy and very pretty woman who posed as the Baroness d'Aspremont, the Countess of Louvain—a singular choice of pseudonym after the invasion of Belgium—and had other aliases of pretended nobility, was really titled, with family connections of authentic grandeur. But everything discovered about *Mademoiselle le Docteur* and her work discredits the imposing past claimed for her, and makes plausible the opinions of French and Belgian secret agents, that she had been a *demi-mondaine*, the mistress of a Prussian general connected with the imperial military Intelligence, who, when his own duty called him to the Western Front, in order to keep her amused, arranged for her induction into the German secret service. He understood her, true—but how he under-rated her ! The amusement of *Mademoiselle* became one of the most fearful innovations of the war.

She soon discovered that the sort of spies she would be expected to manage were a poor lot. Already the arrest of Ernst, Lody, and more than a score of others had decided the German espionage directors to begin employing mercenaries, instead of the patriots who eagerly and bravely, if clumsily, had undertaken the most perilous kinds of missions for the Fatherland. *Mademoiselle le Docteur* investigated the character of the professional agent, unreliable, wanting the maximum pay but a minimum risk, failing in courage at the first threat of danger, and always eager to change sides when cornered

and caught. Almost exclusively in charge of such specimens, she began solving her problem with calculated ferocity. To get any result whatever she had to make them more afraid of her than of the French or British or American counter-espionage organisations. At the first indication of the betrayal she was ever on guard against, she unhesitatingly cut the suspect off with the bleak precision of a guillotine. Her method of discipline was simplicity itself. The spy, still believing himself useful to her, was sent out on a mission of no importance. New instructions were sent to the spy after he reached enemy territory in a code that the enemy understood. *Mademoiselle's* doomed agent would then, of course, be "covered" by the counter-spying officers of the Allies. Presently he would be bound to betray himself. Arrest, court-martial, conviction, and execution would follow. *Mademoiselle le Docteur* merely prescribed the punishment. She allowed her opponents to take all the trouble of dealing with the condemned.

The French secret service has admitted capturing fourteen German agents thus flung to them, either by the woman of Antwerp or a disciple of hers acting according to custom. The French knew the trick of it, but the spies they gathered in were real enough, and quite unaware of the fatal futility of the errand on which they had come ; and so, however to be pitied, they had to receive a penalty in keeping with the work they had undertaken. In time the spies that *Mademoiselle* or her imitators sacrificed in this way came to be called fool-spies. And, having ruthlessly devised this measure of discipline, *Mademoiselle's* formidable talent for intrigue enabled her to apply it as an espionage stratagem in her way upon the Allies.

The fool-spy now was purely a dupe, enlisted for the job of getting himself into trouble. *Mademoiselle* often had agents valuably operating whose position was so hazardous they might be detected at any moment. On strategic grounds it seemed to her important to let the enemy counter-espionage detect and arrest a spy at a certain point near where the valuable spy was secretly at work. In short, the disclosure and downfall of the fool-spy screened, according to her scheme, the continued activities of the trustworthy agent. But the Allied secret services were too experienced to be baffled by such subterfuges. They quickly learned to distinguish the fool-spy ; and such unfortunates were not shot, but were put out of harm's way in a military prison or internment camp. And the pursuit of *Mademoiselle's* other emissaries vigilantly continued.

She sent a certain Joseph Marks to England, much against his natural inclinations ; for poor Marks was so scared, so unsuited to the enterprise engaging him, that he could not even get past the British port authorities. Being questioned, he broke down immediately and confessed. He described himself as a reputable business man of Aix-la-Chapelle, but said he had been three times arrested and accused of spying for the French. He was sent to Antwerp, and " the terrible Miss Doktor," there told him he must prove his loyalty by becoming a German agent.

Patriotic blackmail of this sort was a commonplace with *Mademoiselle.* She wisely entrusted no secrets to Marks, but gave him a passport making him out to be Dutch, a sum of money, elaborate instructions—and a stamp album. She was exceedingly clever in originating new methods of secret communication which would pass the enemy censors. Marks was to be a naval spy. He was to visit the many British ports, take note of the warships in the harbours, and then send a set of stamps to a certain address in Holland. Thus, seven Peruvian and four Mexican stamps sent from Portsmouth would mean that seven cruisers and four battleships were there in port at the date of the British postmark. This was an unexpected dodge, and Marks was forwarded to Scotland Yard for additional interrogation. He eagerly told all he could, which was not much, and when informed that he would be interned for the duration of the war he wept for joy. He said that a British prison was the only place where his life would be safe after failing to serve " that woman."

Marks did not exaggerate, for witness her method in dealing with another blunderer. The spy, Van Kaarbeck, was a Hollander who had once enjoyed wealth and considerable distinction, but he had foolishly squandered the former and tarnished the latter. Reduced to working at any odd job, he was nearly destitute when a German agent picked him up and took him to Antwerp as a likely recruit. Van Kaarbeck was no coward ; he was well educated and widely travelled ; *Mademoiselle* took great pains with his instruction. However, she could not eliminate his vices which had pulled him down from a loftier place before. Arriving in Paris, Van Kaarbeck began to spend the money she had allowed him, and, once removed from sobriety, he talked too much. He talked to a cabaret girl in Montmartre, who was allied to the French secret service, and she promptly reported him.

But still another secret agent was reporting upon this man's monstrous stupidities. One of *Mademoiselle le Docteur's* spies had come into touch with him and saw at once how

dangerous he was to the German undercover organisation. This spy, after warning Antwerp, fled from Van Kaarbeck as if from typhus. It was certain the French counter-spying officers would cross his voluble trail. He had told the cabaret girl he was a German agent and invited her to work for him. The French, in fact, were covering him, but were not ready to arrest him, hoping that he would lead them to other and more secretive employees of the ruthless *Mademoiselle.* This Van Kaarbeck failed to do, as all of the others had been swiftly warned to avoid him. Then it was decided to gather him in, as he had already convicted himself; but the night before he was to be arrested, gendarmes found Van Kaarbeck lying in an unfrequented street in the old part of Montmartre, stabbed through the back. His assassin had impudently left the dagger behind as a warning to the loquacious. Its blade was of German make.

Hoegnagel, also a Netherlander, who was executed in August, 1917, was a more pitiable dupe. *Mademoiselle* asked no more of this commercial traveller than that he deliver several Dutch newspapers to friends of hers in the French capital. Innocent and clumsy, Hoegnagel attracted the attention of vigilant counter-espionage agents. They questioned him, and examined two of the newspapers he still had in his possession. The margins of these were discovered to contain a quantity of secret writing. Hoegnagel was really bringing questionnaires to German spies, indicating what information the Antwerp headquarters was most anxious to obtain. One of his remaining two papers was obviously intended for the notorious spy, Suzette. Hoegnagel seemed a proper bait for the trap which would finally land that troublesome young lady. But again he blundered and Suzette was warned away. Hoegnagel, having confessed, was put on trial. The death penalty inflicted seems to-day to have been needlessly severe in his case.

But *Mademoiselle le Docteur* continued inflicting it as she chose, once at least by her own hands. The Allies had made strenuous efforts to blind the spy service she had developed against them. As a crowning triumph a Belgian, who professed to sympathise with the German invaders, was introduced into the headquarters of the woman in Antwerp, and by his cleverness and diligence came to be her trusted assistant. As she was constantly sending out new spies and likewise receiving cunningly masked communications from those operating in enemy countries, the young Belgian's chance to checkmate her was unrivalled. But in combating the devices of such a woman the most cautious and subtle manœuvres

were necessary. She dispatched a spy from Holland to Scotland, intending him to make his way deviously into France. The Belgian reported this, perceiving the threat of the spy's assignment. Unfortunately, the day he landed in Dunkirk an over-zealous police official, notified of his coming, took him into custody and charged him directly with espionage.

In the miraculously swift way that she had, *Mademoiselle le Docteur* learned only two days later that her new man was doomed. She summoned the Belgian, it is said, and told him of the agent's impossibly quick detection. And she observed that only two people knew of that agent and his destination—only two !—herself, and the Belgian. Then she took a revolver from her desk drawer and shot him dead. . . .

And even this episode is not the climax of her merciless efficiency in the work that she loved and performed with such skill. *Mademoiselle* tyrannised over her German associates regardless of what influential connections they might have. For a time her technical adviser was a nobleman with the title of count, and the military rank of lieutenant-colonel. When spies sent in details of new artillery or any other mechanical contrivance it was this officer's duty to pass upon the technical importance of the item thus revealed. *Mademoiselle le Docteur* was even smart enough to know her own limitations. But she never allowed herself to fail. There was always a *bona fide* culprit associated with her mistakes.

The Allies were secretly at work upon the new tanks, an innovation expected to sweep the Germans from the field. *Mademoiselle's* agents—despite the impressive secrecy—got wind of the military invention. She had three separate reports about the tanks, the last one even describing what sort of mechanism it would prove to be. Each report she referred to her technical adviser, who pronounced the thing fantastic. Such weapons of war might be built as a stunt, but what good would they be in the field—against an artillery barrage, high explosive shells ? *Mademoiselle* had him initial each spy's report, and after the third one she had him file a memorandum of his official opinion. Tanks were possible, but of no importance—of no conceivable military value !

Very well ! Byng struck at Cambrai with tanks and went through the German lines so fast and so far that he was unprepared for his success and failed to consolidate large gains. A report of this British victory reached *Mademoiselle* at once. She understood its significance, but her adviser's report upon her spies' reports was on file. She simply sent him the official version of the Cambrai attack and a revolver. He knew what she advised in cases of failure, and he committed suicide.

WHITE WINGS TO THE RAVEN

By

S. T. FELSTEAD

In the Allies Intelligence services behind the German lines many priests were engaged circumventing the enemy. Here is related the exploits of the Abbé Walravens, a famous cleric who operated an espionage system numbering 600 agents.

AUTUMN had come to Arendonck. The yellowing poplars which lined the road to Brussels rustled and swayed in the chill October breeze, bowing their heads with graceful humility to the change of the year. An occasional peasant tramped alongside a wagon laden with roots. But everywhere one could see the desolation that had descended upon the land since the invader had come into Belgium. Monsieur l'Abbé Ghislain Walravens, the vicar of the parish, looked out of his study window and sighed, wondering what would be the end of it all.

In the midst of his ruminations the front door-bell rang and the dignified-looking priest gave a guilty start. Too well was he aware that he had already involved himself in one or two little *affaires* which might land him in trouble.

However, his rosy-cheeked housekeeper came with the information that the visitor was a good friend, the physician Mathé from Brussels.

"What brings you here, doctor?" inquired the vicar, shaking hands.

"Surprised to see me, eh? Read this."

With knitted brows the vicar perused the long letter. It was from an old friend, Emile Broeckx, at Bar-le-Duc in Holland. ". . . As you probably know, an important information service has disappeared these last few days. (He was referring to the Backelmans-Frank service.) A message has been received from English headquarters asking me if it is possible to find some one willing to take up the work. A newer and bigger organisation is contemplated and I think you are the man to run it. Ample funds will be provided; it it vitally necessary that observation centres be established on all railway lines and at the most important centres. . . ."

The vicar read it through carefully, scanned it again, and remarked, "Well, it seems there will be money available, which was more than the case with the French."

Striding up and down his study, he exclaimed, "This wants thinking out; I have had the idea in my mind for a long time. But before I start, everything must be planned out. You can take Broeckx a reply, doctor?"

"Yes, verbally. It is true the Germans allow me to pass over the frontier, but the fewer letters I carry about the better."

"Then tell Emile, or have a message conveyed to him, that I will let him know one way or the other within a fortnight. There are others to be consulted."

The doctor took his departure and the vicar sat down to weigh up the pros and cons of the whole matter. Like many more of the clergy in Belgium, he felt it a sacred duty to fight the invader with the weapons at his command; had any one remonstrated with him on the incongruity of a priest becoming what was nothing less than a master spy, he would have retorted, "Spying! There is no such word involved. What I am doing is fighting for my country, with my life at stake. My conscience is clear." He took counsel with his family, his sister Marguerite, his three brothers Emile, Charles and Paul. All four enthusiastically applauded the idea and announced their intention of collaborating with him. So a letter was sent to Broeckx and the vicar cautiously began enrolling his agents.

First and foremost, as he well knew, was the question of an absolutely trustworthy courier; he had already seen the dire results that attended the employment of doubtful persons. So one day about the end of the month the vicar took a trip to Turnhout, close to the Dutch frontier. There he called upon his friend Joseph Spaessens, the chief of the tramway service which ran into Holland.

"Joseph," the vicar began, "I wonder whether I could induce you to undertake some dangerous work for your country?"

The tramwayman, a thickset intelligent fellow about forty years of age, laughed. "I have my own ideas of what you are after, Father. The trams will be useful for carrying dispatches, is it not so?"

"Your intuition is admirable, my dear Joseph. How is it to be managed?"

For half an hour or more they discussed ways and means. Suddenly Spaessens slapped the vicar on the knee. "I have it," exclaimed Joseph. "You, too, shall be a rabbit fancier!"

Famous for many miles around was the chief of the trams as a breeder of rabbits; his collection took all the prizes and everybody came to him for his celebrated bucks.

"Yes," he continued, "you also shall be a breeder of rabbits. Then we may meet as much as we like and if the Germans are inquisitive, why, we are discussing rabbits." The vicar smiled, and said he knew nothing about them. "You will soon learn," said Joseph. "I will build you the hutches and send you some of my own breed."

Next arose the question of a courier between Turnhout and Antwerp. Walravens had other friends in Antwerp whom he proposed to enlist. Here Spaessens was able to help again. His colleague Swannet, who controlled the trams running into the Belgian seaport, would be a good man to see that the reports came out of there safely enough.

From Turnhout the vicar journeyed to Antwerp and called upon two doctors of his acquaintance, Mets and Elsmortel. He found them anxious and willing, not only to ensure collection of reports, but also to establish a sub-service of their own. It was surprising how many people in important positions were eager to strike a blow at the occupant. The town librarian said he must come in; the Canon Zech, who was head of the Institute St. Jean Berchmans, offered the use of his place for meetings; the engineer Vander Eecke thought he might use his technical knowledge to tell the Allies how the Germans were fortifying the city. A husband and wife volunteered to deal with money coming from Holland. The vicar went back to Arendonck well pleased, his final words being that his sister Marguerite would be his representative in Brussels, to whom they should address all communications.

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While these preliminary arrangements were being made there had been further communications from Broeckx in Holland asking for services in the south of Belgium and the north of France; the problem was how should he travel without arousing suspicion. The Germans would certainly inquire what he was doing so far away from his parish.

Like a sensible man he chose the obvious method. In his priestly garb, carrying his own identity card, he would go to Enghien, to the Christian College where he had studied as a boy. The reason? He desired to study social questions with his old mentor, the Abbé Botteldoren, whom he had not seen these many years.

To Enghien, then, where the old Abbé greeted him with amazement. "What brings you to Enghien after all these years?" said the venerable Father.

Walravens explained.

"I have had it in mind to seek out my old schoolfellows;

there must be dozens of them in the provinces who would be useful."

The Abbé nodded approvingly. "That would be your best plan. I will make out a list of as many as are likely to be available." For a day or two the vicar stayed at the college and then, with a list of former pupils whom he remembered well, he once more set out, a recruiter of spies, and as such, now liable to sudden death at the hands of an enemy firing-party.

Tournai, Froyennes (the parson of this village was an old school friend and got him an observer to watch the trains on the Courtrai-Lille route), Ath, Briane-le-Conté, Soignies, Mons, Binché, Merbes-les-Chateau and Charleroi, were all visited by the untiring Walravens. Danger threatened now and then. One day a German patrol pulled him up, demanding his identity card. Suddenly the officer's horse shied; the vicar jumped and grabbed the bridle.

"Ich danke Ihnen, mein Vater," said the officer, saluting. Without bothering to look at the card, he gave a sharp word of command and the Uhlans trotted on. Walravens breathed more freely.

Back to Arendonck, to find more trouble awaiting him. His parishioners were talking too much about his fifteen days' absence. Their gossip might have made any German who understood their patois wonder how he had managed to move about Belgium so freely; but the vicar explained that he had been studying social matters for their benefit; nobody understood, but nobody cared. All was well for the time being.

Awaiting him also was another letter from Holland, acknowledging what he had already accomplished, and asking now that he should institute services in Brussels, Louvain and Malines. Everything was working smoothly in Brussels; his sister Marguerite functioned admirably as a "letter-box," his two brothers Emile and Charles were watching the flying-grounds and the big German camps at Etterbeek, and Emile also had watchers on the railways.

From Antwerp the reports came in with unfailing regularity. The vicar sent for his friend the rabbit-fancier, who, after inspecting the newly-built hutches, had supper and went back to Turnhout with three letters containing much valuable information that had been copied in invisible ink by Marguerite.

There was nothing to stop him extending the services as desired. Over to the ancient city of Malines he went, to call upon two brothers whom he knew. They were willing to

survey the passage of troops through the place famous for its lace, as well as watch the barracks. In Louvain he came across another man whom he persuaded to give up his intention of going to Holland and become an agent of the secret service instead.

There were humorous interludes. Calling one day on the Abbé Riviere of La Buissiere, he was told, "My dear Ghislain, if you want a really good agent around here, why do you not go to Léon de Boucq, the engineer of Charleroir? He was one of the associates of Joseph Backelmans. But you will need to approach him with the utmost care."

The next day the vicar called on De Boucq, who listened non-committally to all his caller had to say. Courteously as he had been received, Walravens felt something was wrong. Little did he know that in the next room Madame De Boucq and her daughter were minutely examining his three-cornered hat to see if it was a real Belgian one—or a made-in-Germany variety! Nor, for the matter of that, did he realise that Madame had a revolver in her hand, ready to shoot him if one misplaced word revealed the German spy!

But De Boucq would give no definite reply. "I will let you know," was all he would say.

Back to Louvain again; a message had reached him that the agent there found difficulty in finding a suitable house for watching the trains; most of them flanking the railway line had been burnt down by the Germans. That little problem settled, he returned to Ardndonck.

Next day, to his surprise, he had a call from De Boucq, much more cordial now. When the vicar took him inside he said he had spent the intervening time making careful inquiries.

"Now I know that everything is all right, I am more than willing to collaborate," he began. "But there must be no risks. Backelmans was incredibly careless, but there is no reason why other lives should be thrown away."

Deep into the night the two men sat discussing details. De Boucq had been an active agent of Backelmans—more valuable still, he was an intensely cautious man with a wonderful talent for organisation. They had dinner together and De Boucq stayed the night. In the morning he left with the understanding that they would meet at a convent in Antwerp a fortnight later with their plans ready.

During that time De Boucq enlisted agents of his own in Charleroi and the surrounding district. In the town itself he took counsel with the *apotheke* François Pevenasse and gave him the *nom de guerre* of "White Nigger." The time was to

come when the secret police were searching all over Belgium for the mysterious "White Nigger." A member of the De Boucq household, Emilie Fenasse, was also taken into the secret, as was Madame herself and the daughter. Not even the young son Paul was left out. When he heard of the conspiracy, he firmly announced his intention of becoming a spy forthwith. Not for nothing had he been a Boy Scout !

. . . .

At this period espionage arrests were being made wholesale all over Belgium. If the Germans could congratulate themselves that they had effectually smashed up the spying carried on by the administrative services, they were ignorant for some time about the work now being done under the guidance of Walravens and De Boucq. The latter, without a doubt, was the inspiring genius of the new organisation.

Mons, where the vicar had vainly looked for adherence, now harboured over a hundred agents working under the control of two Abbés. Every branch was isolated ; the individuals themselves knew only their immediate masters. One of these men with his son took work on the station at St. Ghislain, a successor to the police commissary Thiry, who was now a prisoner in Germany. Regularly, with false keys, they opened German trucks on their way to the front and reported on their contents.

At the station of Mons itself a couple more agents took work under the Germans and thereby brought much opprobium on themselves from their fellow countrymen, who promptly blacklisted them as traitors. It remained for the war to come to an end before they could be rehabilitated in the eyes of their townsmen.

By the end of six months the Biscops service numbered 600 agents ; it was easily the biggest thing of its kind until the League of the Phantom Lady came into existence. In the different sections the reports passed through the hands of one man, who in his turn sent them on to the agent above, by whom they were finally sent into Brussels to await conveyance to Holland.

De Boucq was proving a tower of strength. He frequently carried the reports to Brussels himself in the portfolio he used for his engineers' drawings. He had struck up a friendship with the chief of the German police in Charleroi ; sometimes the two men travelled to Brussels together. De Boucq would meet him at the station, give him a cordial good-morning, and then chat all the way to the capital calmly and cleverly, with not the slightest hint in his demeanour that the dispatch-

case he had so carelessly thrown on to the luggage-rack contained a few hundred spy reports.

On arriving at Brussels the chief was useful in passing the barrier. A nod to the police on duty and De Boucq was through with hardly as much as a questioning stare.

But hard work for all, as well as unendingly dangerous. For three nights a week Walravens and his sister laboured at the messages. It became necessary to employ assistance. A fellow vicar was brought in, as well as his old friend Dr. Mathé. Regularly it happened that there were over a hundred reports on troop trains to be deciphered and copied in minute handwriting for transmission to England.

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No fewer than fifty-one black cassocks were now engaged in foiling the enemy ; the Germans swore repeatedly that the clergy were their greatest enemies in Belgium, and with good cause. Their widespread parishes and their influence over the population generally made them agents of the most formidable description. At this period at least eighty per cent. of the information coming out of Belgium emanated from the Biscops service.

Walravens himself was astounded at the material he received from the different agents. There was the famous Hindenburg document, stolen from a drunken German general, which gave a vivid account of the demoralisation of the enemy after the battle of Verdun. It went to England, where at first the authorities would not believe it. But further investigation soon established its authenticity and told the Allies beyond all doubt that if they were doubtful about the ultimate issue of the war, the Germans were in infinitely worse plight.

Day by day, almost, vital intelligence found its way into Holland, and thence on to G.H.Q. Walravens knew all about the German army that was being sent to fight in Italy ; that the enemy knew the signals of the French aviators. Railways, munition dumps, new types of aircraft, even the composition of the escadrilles who were to man the new Gotha machines on which the enemy placed so much hope for fast bombing, found watchers who got their reports through to Brussels and so over to Holland when " head office " in the capital had done its work.

The Biscops service might have continued until the end of the war but for one of those tragically simple incidents which gave the Germans a clue to the vast organisation functioning under their noses.

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Dr. Mets, one of the agents in Antwerp, happened to fall under the suspicion of the secret police over the trifling matter of leaving the city without a proper permit. He was arrested by some officious underling and ordinarily would have been released within forty-eight hours. But something in his distressed demeanour warned the observant lieutenant who interrogated him that there was more in the matter than appeared on the surface. The lieutenant had been idly looking through the elderly doctor's notebook when he read, "Août 16, see W."

"Who's W?" he inquired, looking up from his desk suspiciously. A man such as De Boucq would have laughed the matter off; not so the poor doctor.

"Oh, er, er, that's a lady, a friend of mine," he answered confusedly.

"I dare say, but who is she?"

"I—I—I cannot say; it is a lady. I must not tell her name."

"You mustn't, eh? You don't go out of this place till you do. Now then, for the last time." But Mets only grew more confused; stubbornly he declined to give his interrogator any further details, with the result that a guard was called for and he was roughly thrust into a cell.

He was brought out again for further questioning; the second time he went back to captivity he found a companion, a Frenchman shabbily dressed who seemed to be in desperate plight.

Mets knew nothing about stool-pigeons. This fellow, the notorious Delacourt whom the Germans had already used to trap other English agents, told him a convincing story of spying in Antwerp and his arrest by the enemy. In the middle of his yarn the Germans hauled him out of his cell and, apparently, subjected him to gross violence judging by the cries that came from him in the passage outside. The doctor took it all in.

Delacourt came back after an hour, to relate with great verisimilitude how he had been bullied and threatened outside. The doctor sympathised with him and related what had happened over the mysterious "See W."

"Who is this W?" asked the other. Unthinkingly, the doctor told him about Mlle. Walravens in Brussels, and that she was one of the heads of a service of vast importance.

Events moved with startling rapidity. In less than an hour Delacourt banged on the door and told the soldier who answered that he desired to see the lieutenant. He never came back to the cell and Mets began to ask himself why.

But telephone bells were ringing between Antwerp and Brussels. The secret police of Section " A " got busy straight away. A Belgian *agent-provocateur* speeded out of the office to call at Mlle. Walraven's address, giving himself out as a courier sent from the Cereal Company in Flushing.

" Mademoiselle Walravens ? " he inquired deferentially.

" Yes," said the lady, eyeing her caller up and down in no pleasant manner. " What do you want ? " She already knew of Dr. Mets' arrest.

" I have come from Flushing."

" I know nothing about you, and nothing about Flushing. Kindly leave this house at once." The visitor could do no less than obey. However, he went no further than the nearest corner, where four policemen awaited his tidings. He told them what had happened ; the officer in charge decided that " W " had better be arrested forthwith. Obviously she was not of the type likely to talk.

Quick as he was, Mlle. Walravens had been a little quicker. But ten minutes had elapsed ; in that time all the papers she possessed of the service were a heap of ashes. They took her off to the Kommandantur to see what could be elucidated there, two of the men remaining behind in the house waiting to pounce on any one else who rang at the bell.

Three people were caught, one of them, unfortunately, a woman who was easily terrorised. Once more the " stool-pigeon " came into play. A woman who had been condemned to death with her husband was the medium ; the Germans kept her, after shooting her man, on the understanding that she would live as long as she did what was required of her. In the course of a few days she was able to tell the head of Section " A " that the man who really mattered was Léon De Boucq.

In the meantime three of the Abbé Walravens' brothers had been arrested, fortunately without the Germans finding any fresh and compromising papers. On September 4th they descended upon the vicar himself at Arendonck ; he was calmly awaiting their arrival, confident in his ability that they could obtain no evidence that would mean a death sentence. He was reckoning without the ubiquitous " stool-pigeon."

On arrival at De Boucq's house in Charleroi the Germans were foiled in catching De Boucq himself. They had timed their raid at six o'clock in the morning when everybody should have been in bed. The De Boucq family were at Mass. The trio of policemen who routed the companion, Emilie Fenasse, out of bed in her nightgown, sat down to

wait, and took no notice when she switched on an outside light which warned De Boucq that the police had come at last.

Turning the corner, the engineer saw the danger signal. Hastily he conferred with his wife. She herself with her daughter courageously went home and faced the inevitable imprisonment. Nor could the enemy find anything incriminating in De Boucq's house. With his disappearance they were temporarily at a standstill.

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Here, then, was checkmate to the Biscops service. The Walravens family were in gaol, while Léon De Boucq was hiding in a house in Brussels with a relative. News had been sent through to Holland about the catastrophe ; orders came back that he must make every effort to reopen communication and keep working whatever was left of the organisation.

An old lady in the suburb of Schaerbeek, Madame Stevens-Descamps, informed him that she would willingly act as letter-box in place of Mlle. Walravens, adding that she hadn't many years to live, so it didn't matter anyway. A wonderful old soul she proved ; when the Germans eventually caught her she defied them with a spirit which made even the officers on the court-martial smile behind their hands.

The real trouble was the lack of couriers. Frantically searching hither and thither, De Boucq first of all got into touch with l'Abbé Dierckx of Turnhout, who in his turn, the frontier then being particularly difficult, sent him on to l'Abbé Anceaux of Namur, who really belonged to a big service in Liége. It was quite obvious, from the news that had spread like magic, that De Boucq was too dangerous to touch. The sooner he was got out of Belgium the better, and to that end he was eventually smuggled across the frontier and disappeared out of the work he had carried on with such courage and ability.

He had designated his successor. This was to be his friend François Pevenasse, the *apotheke* of Marcinelle, just outside Charleroi. When he reached Holland safely he reported to "Evelyn," the British officer in charge of the Biscops service, telling him everything that had happened.

Time went on ; the Germans were in no hurry. Day by day they interrogated their prisoners in St. Gilles, each sitting producing fresh results. One captive incriminated another, and Goldschmidt was certainly clever at putting two and two together.

It must have been one of the prisoners who blurted out something about the frontier guards being in the great plot.

Some two months after the first arrests had been made there was a sudden raid on them and by sheer bad luck one of the suspects was the stout, middle-aged Landsturmer who had picked up De Boucq's message from Holland. Anxious to save his own skin, he told all about it. It was duly resurrected and the Germans interestedly read that the Abbé Dierckx must now look to "White Nigger" as the head of the Biscops service.

Worse still, there was a communication for "White Nigger" himself, an order to resume operations as soon as possible, and if that was not bad enough, the address in Brussels where he could be found.

Watch on the house revealed no one approximating to a "White Nigger," nor even a white man.

"There seems to be dozens of priests in this affair," said Goldschmidt. "We'll add another one to the collection." Accordingly he dressed one of his men up in a cassock and sent him along to interview the old lady with whom "White Nigger" should have been staying.

"You know me, Madame," queried the caller when he got inside the house. "I am the Abbé Dierckx."

"No, Monsieur," said the old lady, who was De Boucq's aunt. "But I have heard of you."

"You know this, then," replied the false priest, producing De Boucq's message. Putting on her glasses, the old lady carefully scanned the writing and said, "Yes, it is certainly from my nephew, Léon De Boucq. But I am sorry I cannot help you, monsieur. The man to whom this is addressed is not staying in my house."

"Ah, then you may perhaps be able to tell me where I can find him?"

The aunt thought awhile. "You had better see Madame Stevens-Descamps in Schaerbeek; she, I think, will know."

But this old lady had no idea who "White Nigger" was, or where he lived.

"There is some one in Charleroi who might help you, Monsieur l'Abbé. Like yourself, he is a priest." She wished him good-bye with great cordiality.

Back to Charleroi again, this time in ordinary clothes. The grave and courteous man in a cassock who received him listened to what he had to say with thoughtful eyes, but shook his head most decidedly when "White Nigger" was mentioned.

"I know nothing about such people," was all he would say. "You have come to the wrong place." Peremptorily he led the way to the front door and showed his unwelcome

visitor out with no unnecessary show of politeness. So it was a case of return to Brussels. Lieutenant Goldschmidt heard the story, then remarked, " Go back and see that old aunt. Tell her that her friend Stevens-Descamps sent you to the priest in Charleroi, and that he would have nothing to do with you. Ask her if she will write a letter to the priest herself, and tell him he is making a mistake. You had better get her to enclose De Boucq's message, and add a note to the effect that it undoubtedly comes from him."

No sooner said than done; the unsuspecting old lady duly wrote a letter to the priest in Charleroi in which she said it was vitally necessary that " White Nigger " should establish contact with the bearer—no less a person than l'Abbé Dierckx.

This time the plotters succeeded. The Charleroi priest took the aunt's letter and handed it on to " White Nigger," warning him at the same time of his own fears. But Pevenasse seems to have had no doubts. " I'll go into Brussels and meet this Abbé Dierckx," he said boldly. The latter had made a rendezvous at the house of Madame Stevens-Descamps. The old lady sat in her parlour talking with the pseudo-Abbé.

Suddenly the front door-bell rang; Madame hastened to the door and with much voluble pride returned with the elusive " White Nigger."

The two men looked at each other with mutual suspicion. Too late, however; before Pevenasse could utter more than a stiff greeting, the other man pulled out a pistol and exclaimed, " You are my prisoner; I am from the police."

" Police ! " shrieked Madame Stevens-Descamps—and fainted. When she came to, " White Nigger " had vanished, as had his captor. But there were four more policemen in the house who, before they took her away, ransacked the place from top to bottom. She, too, joined the party in St.-Gilles, while the Germans set out on another raiding expedition which brought the total number of prisoners up to seventy-five.

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Seven months were to elapse before they were tried. The three of them were sentenced to death, as was Marguerite Walravens. Her other brothers were sentenced to life-imprisonment, as were half a dozen others. The remainder of the prisoners were to go to Germany for terms varying from fifteen years downwards.

The Pope himself intervened to save the condemned people, backed up by the Spanish Minister in Brussels, the

Marquis de Villalobar, and many other influential individuals. It was decided, serious as the case was, that the death sentences should be commuted.

Even then, the Abbé Walravens was not out of the wood. The Germans accused him of having committed other acts of espionage. They sent him to Lille to be tried, and kept him there for some weeks while the war was fast drawing to a close. He led a life of semi-torture, his food consisting of a little bread and a pint of greasy liquid masquerading as soup. He was allowed no change of linen, no soap, nor even an hour's exercise daily.

Lingering in his cell day by day wondering what his fate would be, the Abbé heard the bombardment that presaged the coming of the victorious Allied troops. The Germans evacuated Lille, and when they entered the city the Abbé Walravens tasted the joys of freedom once more.

POISONED KISSES

By

BARONESS CARLA JENSSEN

FORTUNE-TELLING, though I will not go so far as to say that I have actually believed even one half of the wonderful things its exponents have told me, has always amused and fascinated me. When, therefore, some of my London friends poured a story into my ears one day of a truly marvellous old gipsy-woman who lived down in the East End and produced the most thrilling results, I was all eagerness to give her a personal trial.

A few afternoons later I sallied forth to investigate, accompanied by another girl and a man. We discovered the sybil in a room of a squalid Limehouse tenement-building. She was fat, half-blind, dirty and exceedingly malodorous, and had nothing about her to suggest the traditional gipsy. In fact, I am inclined to believe that she was really just an old "Scotch Cockney." But she was fey—no mistake about that.

She told fortunes by the cards, and the very first thing she had to say when my turn came was that I loved a man whom I could not possibly obtain because another woman stood in the way—a woman who, incidentally, cared not a rap for him.

Naturally enough my thoughts flew to a certain person, though it seemed to me that the chief obstacles to my winning him lay in the fact that I had not the faintest notion in what part of the world he was to be found and, in all likelihood, would never see his face again. Yet I am able now to say definitely that, in addition to those considerations, another woman *did* stand in the way, and the fortune-teller spoke no more than the truth in saying that the woman in question cared nothing for the man who meant everything to me. . . .

Then the fat old creature went on to announce that she could provide a magic, infallible medium whereby I might attain my heart's desire, all obstacles notwithstanding.

I pricked up my ears at that. Not that I for one moment considered her claim in any potential connection with the man in question of course. My interest lay in the fact that we seemed to be reaching ground upon which African witchcraft also had a direct bearing, and African witchcraft I had always found a fascinating study. I was eager to

compare this old woman's formulas with those I had seen in operation in the kraals.

"Will you get me some of this magic potion?" I asked.

She answered that it should assuredly be forthcoming, provided—and she hoped I wouldn't mind her mentioning this—the money was paid in advance.

"I haven't it with me," I said, "but if you will make the stuff ready in the meantime, I will certainly bring the money next time I come."

I told X—— about this experience next time we met, and asked him whether any news of my old gipsy had chanced to come his way.

"Well, I've certainly heard of *a* gipsy-woman down in Limehouse who is supposed to be able to work all sorts of wonders," he answered, "but I'm not prepared to say it's the same one. Quite likely, though, I dare say." And he added with a grin, "Better learn all you can from her, Carla. You never know when a real, genuine love-potion mightn't come in useful in our work."

Many a true word is spoken in jest, but at the time I only laughed carelessly at his words. . . .

Three or four days later I paid my promised second visit to Limehouse and, by way of a little encouragement, presented the old harridan with a couple of pounds. She then promised definitely to have a potion ready for me within two days.

She did a bit of crystal-gazing for me, but had nothing particularly noteworthy to reveal. After that we sat and talked late into the evening, while she admitted me to glimpse after glimpse of scenes in her long and interesting life. She was one of the real old "mystery-people," she said. She had wonderful tales to tell of children born of virgins, children in whose mouths a chicken's liver must be held at birth if they are to perpetuate the mystic powers latent in their breed. And much other curious lore she told me; I only wish I had space to set it all down.

In two days I came to receive my love-potion. She handed it to me in an old beer-bottle. When I sniffed at it the smell was strongly astringent.

"Now listen carefully, dearie," said she, "while I give you instructions 'ow to use this. First of all, you dab some of it on your breasts. Then cover them over with cotton-wool for a few hours. You could do that at night when you went to bed, couldn't you, dearie?"

I could only nod, weak with suppressed amusement.

"You won't know yourself when you wake up," the old

creature went on, raising her eyes ecstatically to the fly-spotted ceiling. "You'll smell that 'eavenly! I'm sure all the gentlemen will go wild over you, and I promise you that the one you love will. It 'as the unfailing drawing-power."

"He's the only one that matters," I said, to humour her.

"Just what I've always said, dearie: 'be faithful to love, and your love will be faithful to you' . . . And now I've got something else to give you too."

She rummaged about and produced a little bottle of small, cherry-red pills.

"You get 'im to suck one of these," she exhorted me, "or, if you can't persuade 'im to do that, then slip one into 'is tea or 'is beer. Then if 'e was Good King Wenceslas 'imself 'e couldn't 'elp but fall in love with you."

When I got home I tasted one of the pills and found it was sugar-coated. Then I thought I would try the liquid. So I followed out my mentor's instructions carefully, and, when sufficient time seemed to have elapsed, removed the cotton-wool wrappings.

The perfume that rose to my nostrils was utterly unlike anything I had ever smelled before. I can only describe it—very inadequately, I fear—by saying that it was sweet and warm and languorous, and seemed to suggest something of the mysterious, sensuous Orient.

When I reported all this to the Major, he looked thoughtful.

"I'm beginning to think this must be the old woman I've heard about," he commented. "I know her speciality is aphrodisiacs. . . . By the way, I'm also beginning to think seriously that we might make some real use of her ghastly concoctions."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

He favoured me with a twisted smile, then took refuge, as usual, in the process of lighting his pipe.

"Well," he jerked out between his puffs, "there might conceivably arise situations when a completely irresistible Carla would be useful. . . . Anyway, learn all you can from the old hag, and let me know any developments."

So I continued to visit my fortune-teller, and one day, in pursuance of a notion which had come into my head, I made up a story about a man I wanted to compromise by putting him to sleep.

"Nothing easier, dearie, for them that 'as the luck to be on the right side of the 'mystery-people,'" the crone assured me. "Now did you ever 'ear tell of Flowers of Sleep, I wonder?"

I said I never had.

" No? Well, I dare say you wouldn't 'ave. . . . Just wait a moment and I'll show you some."

" Reely," she explained, while she rummaged about in a large cupboard crammed with jars and boxes—God knows what powers of hell lay dormant in that cupboard of hers! " Reely, in a manner of speaking, it's a perfume what you put on to flowers. . . . Oh, yes, 'ere it is."

She returned with a jar in her hand and carefully filled a tiny bottle.

" You can put it on any sort of flowers," she informed me, " but it 'as such a powerful scent that it's best to choose flowers what 'as a good, strong smell of their own, so as it won't be noticed so much. And best of all, use a bit of orange-blossom. That's what it smells of, you see, dearie."

I asked her how the stuff should be applied, and was told merely to sprinkle a few drops over the petals of the flowers. Then I inquired how much I should have to pay for the little phial she had filled.

" I'll make it cheap to you, dearie," the old wretch wheezed. " Let's split the difference and call it ten pounds."

" I'm afraid you'll have to split the ten pounds too and take half now and the rest when I see you," I answered. She grumbled a little, but I went away with the magic fluid in my pocket and a firm determination in my mind only to pay the balance if the stuff proved genuine.

That was a question which could only be determined by experiment, however, and in the upshot X—— put it to the test on me. We sprinkled a few drops on a flower taken from the vase on my table, then obediently I held it to my nose.

At first I was only conscious of a very powerful smell of orange-blossom. But it grew stronger and stronger with every moment that passed, until presently I could actually *taste* the perfume in my mouth and was assailed by deadly nausea, coupled with a constant desire to sniff and gulp. The effect thus far, I had to admit, was disappointing. And then, quite abruptly, I felt my senses begin to slip away. An overwhelming languor spread through my limbs, a pleasant drowsiness came over my whole being. My will-power was gone utterly, nothing mattered longer except to surrender to the exquisite, voluptuous luxury of slumber. The Major's outline faded into a dim vagueness, his voice thinned into infinite distance. . . .

When I regained consciousness two figures were bending anxiously over me. One was X——'s, the other that of a a doctor who happened also to be his intimate friend.

" Nothing wrong with that stuff, anyway," were the

Major's characteristic first words. "You've slept like the dead for six solid hours, young woman."

He told me afterwards that the drug's effect on me had given him a fright; he had feared I might never wake again. His first action had been to remove the drugged flower and burn it. Then he had summoned the doctor and told him in plain terms exactly what we had been up to. To his great relief the medico, after examining me, pronounced that nothing seemed to be seriously the matter and that I should probably soon be normal again.

Actually, I did wake feeling perfectly well, though I had a sensation of ineffable weariness and could not rid my palate of a taste of orange-blossom.

From the results of this experiment X—— and I learned a very valuable lesson, namely, that the doctored flowers must not be placed too close to the victim as the preliminary sensation of nausea might easily operate to defeat the whole project. By experiment we quickly discovered that at a distance of a few feet the narcotic properties of the perfume were in nowise lessened, while the feeling of sickness was completely absent.

We persuaded our doctor friend to have the stuff analysed, and I know this was done. But what the formula was I cannot say, for the simple reason that I never dared to ask the Major for it. In certain respects he was strangely unapproachable; if there was one thing he detested it was to be worried with questions, and to have asked him for the analysis of the perfume would certainly have been to court a snub. From first to last X——'s inherent distrust of women held him back from admitting me to his full confidence; in a sense I can say that he is the one and only man I have ever really feared.

After the stuff had been duly analysed, a chemist was set to work to devise an antidote. This took the twofold form of a wafer and a liquid, the latter of which smelled strongly of ammonia. We tested this by my putting a little on my handkerchief and holding it to my face while standing a few feet away from some drugged flowers. It proved quite effective.

I continued to visit the gipsy woman from time to time, and one day she asked in the course of conversation whether I had ever heard of the "Poisoned Kiss." I shook my head.

"It sounds interesting," I said. "Please tell me about it."

"Interesting!" the old devil chuckled. "You may well call it that, dearie! . . . And considering the way it 'as to be used, I'd say it would be quite interesting to the gentlemen what 'as it done to them. Till they goes under, anyways."

She then waddled away to her inexhaustible cupboard and

came back with what seemed at first sight to be an ordinary lipstick. It's only remarkable feature was that the colour was of a deeper shade of red than most women use.

"The ''Eart's-blood Lipstick,' I sometimes call it," she remarked. And then she went on to explain its use.

Properly employed, she said, it was guaranteed to produce a heavy sleep in any man kissed by the lips to which it had been applied. But the kiss had to be a pretty passionate affair—none of your "butterfly-kisses"; the stuff would only function satisfactorily if worked right into the victim's mouth. There is no need to descend to crude details; let it suffice to say that the poisoned kiss must of necessity be of that somewhat unreserved variety which is supposed, if one may judge by its popular designation, to be the peculiar diversion of our friends across the Channel. . . .

"All very well," I objected, when this had been duly expounded to me, "but what happens to the woman who applies the kiss? Surely she must get drugged herself."

"Don't you believe it, dearie," declared my instructress. "There's a hantidote what you 'ave to put on first, and then it can't 'urt you."

She then produced a little pot of some vaseline-like ointment which she said must be put on the lips and tongue before applying the "Heart's blood." This would have the effect of forming a protective coating.

That night, when I had reported this new piece of lore to X—— it was decided to put the poisoned kiss to the trial. There was some slight difficulty in deciding who should be experimented upon, the Major firmly maintaining that it was quite necessary for him to retain all his faculties in order to observe results. In the end we got our obliging doctor friend round, and he agreed to submit to the experiment.

At first we were inclined to think the stuff a failure. To begin with, the antidote produced a most unpleasant stinging sensation in my lips and tongue, which was very wearing indeed. Secondly, there was far too much hard work attached to the poisoned kiss. I had to go on applying it sedulously for about half an hour before the doctor began to succumb to drowsiness, and for a considerable time longer before he actually fell into insensibility. When at last we reached that stage I was utterly exhausted. The "Flowers of Sleep" method appeared preferable from every point of view.

But X—— was convinced that we had probably been at fault ourselves in our handling of the tests, and during the ensuing days he made some further experiments on his own. As a result, he was presently able to announce that where we

had gone wrong was in not applying sufficient of the salve to my lips. But even then I was not entirely happy at the prospect of having to use the poisoned kiss at all frequently; it left me feeling so wretchedly tired. For this, too, however, the Major's fertile brain found a remedy. In a few days he proclaimed that a drink of milk taken afterwards would restore me almost immediately, and, as usual, he proved right.

II

It was some little time before occasion arose to try out our collection of narcotics, but when at last it did arise the circumstances were sufficiently thrilling.

"Ever heard of Prince Y.Z.?" the Major asked me abruptly one day.

"I think so," I answered. "He's one of those Turkish royalties who got chucked out in 1924 and have been living in exile ever since, isn't he?"

"Correct," said X—— "This particular specimen demands special notice, however. In fact, I've been trying to get to the bottom of his little games for some time."

I waited with interest to hear more. This sounded promising.

"Prince Y.Z.," the Major went on musingly, lighting his pipe, "gives himself the trouble of making frequent trips to Ostend merely to enjoy the society of a certain prominent British diplomat's elderly and highly unattractive lady-secretary."

He took a photograph out of his wallet and handed it to me. It portrayed the features of a regular old maid of the scraggy-and-severe-yet-sometimes-would-be-kittenish type, complete with Peter Pan collar.

"Do you consider that is the face of a woman likely to enslave a wealthy Turk?" X—— demanded.

I did not, and said so.

"My own belief," my Chief declared, "is that the lady is handing out inside information about private negotiations between Britain and Turkey. However, that's what I would like you to go to Ostend and find out. I shall be there too, by the way."

And thus it came about that I arrived the following Thursday in Ostend, armed with the secretarial charmer's photograph, and took a room at the Hotel Litoral, a palatial establishment overlooking the beach.

Soon after my arrival I went to the hotel reception office.

" I believe you are expecting Prince Y.Z. here," I said casually. " Perhaps you would be so kind as to point him out to me when he comes. He is a friend of some friends of mine."

" That is Prince Y.Z. over there, madam," the reception clerk told me.

So he had already arrived, then. I looked in the direction indicated and saw a rather handsome man with brownish hair and moustache and grey eyes, on the smallish side, perhaps, but broad-shouldered and well set up, perfectly dressed and exceedingly well groomed. I should certainly never have supposed him a Turk.

Doubtless I ought to have foreseen the possibility of the hotel management telling Prince Y.Z. that I had been asking about him. At all events, that is what happened, and on the following afternoon, as I sat in the lounge, I suddenly saw with some consternation that the Turk, escorted by the porter, was making his way towards me with the evident intention of speaking.

He introduced himself in very good English, saying how interested he had been to learn that we had mutual friends. I had to do some quick thinking.

" Perhaps that would be putting it too strongly," I smiled. " Mrs. So-and-so " (I forget now what name I made up), " who is a great friend of mine, said she had heard you might be here. And as she once met you somewhere or other, she wanted me to be sure and remember her to you in case we happened to come across each other. So naturally when I saw your name in the register I was interested, and wondered whether I should get an opportunity to meet you."

" Yes, yes, I remember your friend perfectly," the Prince lied politely.

He sat down and we talked for some time in the friendliest fashion, after which we went to the Kursaal together for tea. Then, as he had to go out for dinner, I made my way back to the hotel and reported by note to X——, who was staying there, too, under a fictitious name. The note was taken to him by Agnes, my confidential maid, a girl who was positively invaluable to me on occasions of this description. Indeed, throughout this particular mission the Major and I never spoke to each other except at one juncture which I shall describe in its appropriate place. Apart from that single occasion, we only communicated in writing, via Agnes. The immediate result of my initial report to him was a curt note

telling me to get as friendly as possible with the Prince and play up to him for all I was worth.

The diplomat's secretary did not come to Ostend that week-end after all. She did turn up, though, on the following Wednesday, but by that time Prince Y.Z. and I had become quite intimate. I do not mean to say that he had grown familiar in any way, and I had not encouraged him yet to do so; indeed, I was still very much "Baroness" to him, as befitted a discreet young woman thrown into the society of a Turk.

We had reached that stage of companionship, however, at which it seemed natural to ask each other every day what we planned to do that night. When I put the question on the Wednesday morning, the Prince said with what looked like real regret that there would be no chance of our spending the evening together, as an old English lady, a friend of his family, was coming to look him up. And to make matters worse, he added, news had reached him that morning which might necessitate his leaving next day. But he promised faithfully that in any event we would manage somehow to have one more lunch together.

This I duly reported to X—— We kept separate watch, and neither of us experienced the slightest difficulty in identifying the odd little secretary when she arrived, fussing over her luggage and behaving generally in the exasperating fashion in which old maids do behave.

Through my efficient Agnes I learned that the Prince would dine that night in the secretary's apartment. After dinner they went out together. As they passed through the lounge the Turk caught sight of me sitting over my coffee. He bowed. On some pretext or other I went up and spoke to him. He did not introduce his companion, however, but merely made his excuses to her and then turned to converse for a few moments with me.

While they were out the Major made a systematic search of her rooms, contriving somehow to effect an entrance from his own quarters, which were next door. During this nefarious enterprise Agnes and I kept "cave" at different strategical points, she being stationed in the corridor while I remained downstairs in the lounge. For what seemed a very long time I sat idly watching the people drifting in and out, and wondering what luck my Chief was having upstairs. Then suddenly Agnes appeared and walked quietly across to me. The Major would be downstairs in a few minutes, she announced, and wished me to devise some pretext for getting into conversation with him.

In due course he strolled into the lounge, stared round him in a bored sort of way and plumped himself down in a chair at the table adjoining my own. Then he picked up an illustrated paper and began to glance through its pages.

Presently I took a cigarette from my case and began to hunt for a match. What could have been more natural then than for a gallant gentleman to strike a light and deferentially offer it to me? And what more natural after that than for two lonely people in a foreign city to drift into a little harmless talk together? . . .

For perhaps three minutes we conversed in the vague, impersonal way in which casual acquaintances do at first converse. Then, quite abruptly, and without in the slightest degree altering the tone of his voice, X—— came down to brass tacks. There was no dropping into a whisper, or any other circumstances that might have attracted attention to us; he simply ran on without a break into what he had really come to say. So far as I can recollect, what he actually said was something like this:

"Customs? Don't talk to me about the Customs! Nothing bores me so much as watching those fellows turn the whole of my luggage upside down and then find nothing at the end of it. . . . But I can sympathise with them in a way, because that's exactly what has just happened to me." Here the Major glanced sharply at my face, saw that I understood the swift transition of his flow of talk. "And so now it's up to you, I think," he ran on, first making sure that nobody was close enough to hear his actual words, "you'll have to get into Y.Z.'s room to-night, by hook or by crook. A good plan would be to pretend to be tight and say you'd come to the wrong room by mistake. Not too many clothes on, of course. . . . If I know anything about Turks, that will secure your admission all right. . . . Then I should use the poisoned kiss method, I think."

X—— concluded this rather lengthy speech with a hearty laugh, in which I joined.

"That's a good one," I approved, "even if it is a little risqué."

"Risqué?" the Major echoed, taking the cue with his usual skill. "It's the most risky thing you've ever had to do yet, and you'll have to go very carefully about it. . . . You'd better pay your bill to-night and tell the hotel people that Agnes will be leaving in advance by car with your luggage. Then tip the word to her to get your things ready and wait outside in the car with them."

When I suggested that the project was risky, I had not

been referring to the risks to my own skin; that was all part of the day's work. But I did think that it was risky to the success of our mission; for the Prince was far from being a fool, and might be very much on his guard against me. And even supposing his Turkishness did overcome his caution, this would be the first time I had ever used the narcotic lip-salve in real earnest. Supposing it failed for any reason? . . . Well, it must not fail, that was all.

X—— had said "It's the most risky thing you've ever had to do yet." But I was sure that he, too, was thinking only of the risks to our success. That is the standpoint in all Secret Service. I was simply the instrument of my Chief's schemes. Provided the plan came off, my personal safety was a minor consideration; if I got ravished—well, I should have been ravished in a good cause. . . .

At about 1 a.m. I took off my dress, slipped on a néglig é, and applied the antidote and "Heart's Blood" to my lips. Shortly after I had completed these preparations the Major came to my room for me. "I shall follow you along the corridor," he whispered, "and await results outside his door after you have gone in. So I shall be close at hand in case of any emergency. Here, take your sponge and towel; you can pretend you've been to the bathroom."

The Prince's room was the last in the corridor. A yard or two from his door, at the end of the passage, a short flight of steps ran up to the doorway which opened, so said a prominent notice, on the fire-stairs. These details I noticed automatically as I marched to meet whatever fate held in store for me.

For a moment or two I held my breath and listened. A cough and a slight rustling of bedclothes came quite distinctly to my ears, followed by the scrape of a match. Evidently the Prince was lying awake; possibly he could not sleep, had decided to try the soothing effect of a cigarette. Well, I wanted him in a restless mood. . . .

I took the key of my own apartment and thrust it into the lock of the Prince's door. Naturally it did not fit, but I poked about with it and swore a little beneath my breath. A voice inside called out "Hallo! Who is there?" I took no notice, merely went on fumbling with the key in the lock. Presently I heard a soft thud which told me Prince Y.Z. had got out of bed.

Then I took hold of the door-knob and shook it impatiently.

"What the devil are you playing at, Agnes?" I grumbled. "Can't you hear me trying to get in? Unbolt the door at once."

The door promptly opened, the Prince stood looking at

me with a rather comical air of astonishment. I stared at him for a moment or two, then blinked and stared again. Finally I gave an inane giggle, interrupted by a hiccup.

"P-pity I didn't have a T-turkish bath," I said, swaying a little and clutching at the doorpost for support. "I m-meant 'say, if I go to have a b-bath and find a T-turkish gen'leman in my room when I c-come back, 'spretty obvious I ought've had a T-turkish bath! Tha's l-logic, don' care wha' anybody says."

The Prince repressed a grin.

"Forgive me, Baroness," he said, "but you've made a mistake. This is my room, not yours."

"D-don' make matters worse by s-saying that," I begged. "M-make me get all m-mixed up in a minute."

"Shall I show you to your own room?" the Turk suggested. But his tone was half-hearted; I could see and hear something else struggling with his gallantry.

"To hell with my room!" I laughed recklessly. "I'm g-going down into the l-lounge to have a drink. C-come along and have one with me, there's a sport!"

"But you can't possibly go down like that!" the man exclaimed, raising his hands in horror.

"Who's going stop me?" I demanded truculently.

"Oh come, Baroness, be sensible! . . . If you want a drink, why don't you come in here and have it with me? Come along, I'll ring for a bottle of champagne."

I leered at him with drunken gravity; there are no other words to describe it.

"All very w-well," I said, "but are you t'be trusted with an unpro- unprot-tected female? . . . I think you're a d-damn sight too g-good-looking, 'f you ask me." And I gave my reckless laugh again.

The Turk's face creased into a gratified, would-be deprecating smile.

"Well, you can't stand out there all night," he protested, taking me by the arm and drawing me into the room. As he closed the door after us I heard the soft click of the key turning in the lock. I glanced towards it behind his back; he had not removed the key, which was some relief.

I had better briefly describe the room. The bed stood against the wall facing the door, and was flanked by a wardrobe. At its side stood a chair heaped with clothes, on top of which lay at attaché-case. Beyond the chair, again, was a pedestal. Immediately to the left of the door as you entered was a second door, leading to the bathroom, and beside this lay a big suitcase.

As he closed the door after us I heard the soft click of the key turning in the lock. I glanced towards it behind his back: he had not removed the key, which was some relief.

The Prince drew forward a chair for me and invited me to sit down. He then pressed the bell and, when the waiter appeared, ordered a bottle of champagne, which he took from the man at the door on his return.

I tossed my first glass down at one gulp.

" Oh, that's w-wonderful ! " I murmured. " One or two g-glasses of champagne, and I d-don' care what happens."

My host promptly refilled my glass.

" Yes, it has a wonderful effect," he agreed. " It banishes care, takes away all one's weariness and fills one's heart with nothing but the desire for—for pleasure."

" It turns me into a devil," I said.

" A very charming devil," remarked the Turk, eyeing me intently ; " a beautiful devil, one to tempt any man."

He came over and stood by my chair.

" Surely a great many men must have told you how beautiful you are ? " he said in a husky voice. " I know I have been thinking nothing else ever since I met you."

" I'm not beautiful," I denied, reaching out for his fingers and caressing them.

" But you are, you are ! " he exclaimed. He stooped and threw his arms round me, then suddenly crushed his lips to my mouth. For a moment or two I pretended to resist him, then I relaxed in his embrace and gave him kiss for kiss.

" Beautiful, beautiful lady ! " he murmured. " I love you . . . Couldn't you love me a little ? "

" I think you're w-wonderful," I said. " I d-don' see how any w-woman could help l-loving you."

At that he went mad, pouring kisses on me and caressing my face, my hair, my body. . . . Presently I freed myself and begged for another glass of wine.

" Just to c-clear my head," I explained. " If I l-let you g-go on k-kissing me like that much longer, I m-might do something s-silly."

He filled my glass, watched me drain it. His eyes were gleaming now, and little beads of perspiration dotted his forehead. . . .

I put the empty glass down on the washstand with such a bang that its base shivered into fragments.

" There, that all your f-fault ! " I accused, laughing idiotically. " You've made me so t-tight I don' know what I'm doing. . . . Give me s'more w-wine."

Excellent host that he was, he filled my glass once more. But this time I did not drink it. Instead, I managed to trip over the hearth-rug, and the whole lot went on the floor, which of course caused me immense amusement again.

I walked unsteadily across the room and flung myself down across the bed. Through half-closed eyes I looked at him provocatively.

"You're not angry about the g-glass, are you ?" I asked.

He shook his head, smiling uneasily. Then he came and sat down beside me on the bed.

"That's right," I approved, and reached up to put an arm round his neck, drawing his face down to mine. "Never mind the b-beastly glass," I said thickly. "When you k-kiss me I f-forget everything."

"I want you to, I want you to," he panted, taking me in his arms and kissing me with a vengeance. Before, I had been conscious, even while he kissed and caressed me, of a certain nervous caution which fought for mastery with his desire. Even when his lips fastened themselves so greedily on mine his eyes had been darting round the room as though he half suspected a trap. Now, however, he surrendered completely to passion. His breathing was rapid, his arms clutched me like bands of steel, while I lay limp and submissive in his embrace, kissing as thoroughly as our experiments had taught me it was necessary to kiss. . . .

At last his muscles relaxed, his breathing slowed down, became stertorous. The poisoned kiss had done its work.

Now for his papers ! In an instant the intoxicated young wanton was transformed, as though by magic, into the alert Secret Service agent. I detached myself gently from the Prince's arms and snatched up the attaché-case from the chair beside the bed. Of course it was locked. Next I tried the suitcase : locked also. Like lightning I went through the pockets of the suit he had been wearing, found some keys, tried them. One fitted the suitcase, and in this I found a few papers, which I promptly stuffed into the bosom of my négligé. None of the keys, however, would fit the attaché-case, and it was there, I felt sure, that any important documents would be lying. At my wits' end, I threw a hasty glance round the room, and my heart gave a wild bound as I caught sight of a chain-end protruding from beneath the Prince's pillow. To drag forth this was the work of a second, and, to my exultation, there were more keys at its other end, besides the man's watch and a gold matchbox. Then another surge of wild joy as I discovered that one of the keys fitted the attaché-case. Success in sight now.

The case was crammed with books and papers. I was just on the point of making a clean sweep of the latter when a sound from the direction of the bed made me glance up. And if I live to be a hundred I shall never forget the sensation

of cold horror I experienced in that moment—the horror of failure impending after all to eclipse my short-lived triumph.

The Prince was sitting up and watching me. It was obvious that the drug still held him in its grip, for his movements were vague and uncertain, his eyes were glazed, and it appeared as though he only kept them open by a violent effort of will. But reason was struggling back to its throne, the man was compelling his reluctant body by sheer mental force to respond to his volition.

"You damn spy!" he said, slowly and thickly. His arm reached out to the pedestal beyond the chair, his hand tugged open a drawer and fumbled in it. . . .

I had considered originally the question of taking the attaché-case, just as it was, rather than spend time over opening it and abstracting its contents. But I had quickly abandoned the idea because it was a large case, to be seen carrying which along a hotel corridor at dead of night would be to invite questions. In this sudden emergency, however, the one and only thing I ought to have done was to snatch up the attaché-case, make a bolt with it and take my chance. And that is the very thing which, like a fool, I did not do. Instead, I flung the case at the Prince.

It struck him on the head, knocking him over sideways, while the papers went showering down all over the floor. And incidentally it knocked out of his hand an ugly-looking automatic pistol he had managed to pull out of the drawer.

But even then, in the confusion begotten of my extremity, I still had to do just the wrong thing. Did I pounce upon the pistol where it lay among the litter on the floor and use it to cover my retreat? I did no such thing. In place of taking that obvious preliminary precaution, I made a wild dive for the papers, snatching up as many as I could grab, then dashed for the door.

The next few seconds were like a fever nightmare; I cannot even attempt to set the frenzied events down in their proper sequence. I have a confused recollection of wrestling with the door-key; of casting over my shoulder a panic-stricken glance that showed me the dreadful apparition of the Prince plunging across the room towards me like a wild beast, yelling at the top of his voice; of hurling right into that contorted, bawling face the champagne bottle I unaccountably found in my hand; then of X——'s steadying grip on my arm as I rushed into the corridor, his cool yet urgent voice directing me: "This way, this way!" I remember hearing doors fly open all along the corridor, voices shout in all keys, feet come running from all directions.

I am not even certain at exactly what point in our headlong flight I got shot. But I think it was just as we rushed up the little flight of steps to the door at the end of the passage that the smack of a pistol-shot echoed through the corridor, though in the excitement of the moment I felt nothing at all. Then, somehow or other we were out in the cool night air, then tumbling rather than running down the fire-escape, then flying down the street, while the hotel hummed behind us like a hive of angry bees. . . .

In our haste we actually passed the spot where the car was waiting; it overtook us a few moments later. Then hell-for-leather we drove to the harbour, and scrambled pell-mell into a motor-boat that X—— had arranged for. A moment or two later we were heading for Dover.

During our wild drive to the waterside I had been subconsciously aware of a stinging sensation in the calf of my left leg. Now it developed into a fiery pain as acute as though my leg were being seared with a red-hot iron. Glancing down, I noticed for the first time that my stocking was soaked with blood; even my shoe was filled with it, and an ominous pool was widening round my foot in the bottom of the boat. The Major made a quick, deft examination, then announced that the bullet had passed right through the flesh and out at the other side, luckily without touching a bone. He applied first-aid, but before the job was completed I had fainted from loss of blood.

To add to the discomfort of my wound, we had a perfectly abominable crossing. From Dover we motored to London, and there I was taken at once to Charing Cross Hospital, where a piece of skin from my thigh was grafted into the bullet-hole. It was five solid weeks before I was able to leave.

There was no denying that this mission had supplied thrills enough to satisfy even my hankering for excitement, and I suppose I was lucky to escape with my life. I am glad to say, too, that the mission proved not to have been in vain. As soon as I was able to receive visitors, X—— came to see me in hospital with the news that although the majority of the papers I had secured had proved valueless, there were nevertheless among them a few of the very highest importance—copies, in fact, of some extremely confidential correspondence that had passed between the British and Turkish Governments. So I felt that the hazards of our enterprise had been more than balanced.

GUN-RUNNING IN SOUTH AFRICA

By

DOUGLAS BLACKBURN

AND CAPT. W. WAITHMAN CADDELL

ABEL ERASMUS, for many years Native Commissioner of the Lydenburg District of the Transvaal, was in many respects as great a man as any of the Boers who have made history, but, unlike them, he had neither apologist nor critics on a grand scale. Locally, and even in the Parliament House, he and his policy were at remote intervals the subject of a few remarks when native affairs were under discussion ; but to the average non-political Transvaaler Abel Erasmus was a name that conveyed little.

The Lydenburg District is the most densely populated native portion of the Transvaal. For many years its contribution of hut tax to the Treasury has been more than treble that of any other native district. It is also geographically and ethnologically the most interesting portion of the colony. Lydenburg is the jumping-off place for the Northern Territories, for Portuguese East Africa, and for Swaziland. The native tribes whose kraals dot every hillside in this romantic region are strictly composite, since they are connected directly or indirectly with practically every great native race that has flourished between the Limpopo and the Orange River. Authorities have found among them types of origins from as far north as the Ethiopian and the Soudanese, and certain it is that among the kraals of the Lydenburg District are to be met characteristic examples of every native quality, from the highest courage and ignorance to the lowest pusillanimity and foxy intelligence.

It used to be said that every native indaba echoed against the rocks of the Ohrigstad, which was a picturesque way of suggesting that the doings of Kaffirdom were known to the natives of the Lydenburg District almost immediately. Like most axiomatic generalisations, this one is an exaggeration, but it is none the less a fact that Abel Erasmus was the best-informed white man in the land when native affairs were matters of import to the ruling race.

"You must tell Abel," and "What will Abel say?"

were the stock ejaculations of every induna when an item of news of any import reached a kraal, and by encouraging this newsmongering the Lydenburg Native Commissioner built up a system of native intelligence that has had no equal in the land.

It would not be taken amiss by the subject to say boldly that he was a despotic tyrant in his treatment of the teeming thousands of natives under his charge. He more than once so described himself, and justified it by the freedom from internecine strife and rebellion that characterised his reign.

Naturally the old man got oceans of lies and flattery, but a pearl of truth occasionally came to hand. He was always particularly interested in hearing of the doings of any white man who passed among the kraals, be he Boer, Briton, or any "white from across the blue water." The powers of minute observation possessed and practised by the Kaffir have never been fully described or appreciated. He may not have the skill of the bushman or the Australian black in following up a spoor and deducing tangible visions from the pressure of a foot on a pebble, but what he has seen, if only in a momentary glance of the eye, he remembers, and can describe in microscopic detail long afterwards. He is content to leave it to the white man to piece together the lines and colouring and construct from these his picture.

Those wonderful eyes of Abel Erasmus never slept. No Boer saw so much without leaving the stoep of his farmhouse. He knew exactly what mining material passed up country to the Murchison Range mining camps; what prospectors from Barberton or the Rand were at work in his domain; whether they had found anything, were likely to stay or pass on. Day by day he received his reports, and without the necessity for giving instructions or inciting to extra diligence. The kitchen gossip of every homestead within a week's trek was repeated on the stoep of the fortress-like homestead in the Ohrigstad Valley. There was not a wayside canteen or hotel within a hundred miles where there was not a Kaffir kitchen- or house-boy who acted as eyes and ears for the grim old Boer whom many of them had never even seen. Although far out of reach of the telegraph, Abel was rarely more than an hour or two behind the residents of the dorps in wire connection with Pretoria; and it is said that he received the news of Jameson having crossed the border within three hours of that event being known in Johannesburg, a circumstance that can only be adequately surprising to those who know the remoteness of the Ohrigstad.

And hereby hang many startling stories of that perplexing

and never satisfactorily settled puzzle known as Kaffir telepathy. The evidence is overwhelming in support of the assertion that the Kaffirs possess some means of conveying news over great distances under circumstances which preclude the possibility of the agency being any known material means. The story tolld by Mr. Rider Haggard of how he heard the news of the disaster at Isandhlwana, over 200 miles away, within a period too short to admit of ordinary methods of transmission, is a leading case.

A condensed version was contributed by Mr. Haggard to the *Spectator* by way of corroboration of similar cases told by the writer.

The letter ran :

SIR,—

As bearing on the letter of Mr. D. Blackburn which appeared in the *Spectator* of December 13th, the following incident may interest your readers. About twenty hours before, men, riding as fast as horses could carry them, brought the news of the disaster at Isandhlwana to Pretoria, an old Hottentot, my washerwoman, informed me of what had happened as an item of interesting news while delivering the clean clothes. She said that Cetewayo had gained a great victory, and that the *rooie-batjes* (redcoats) lay upon the field of battle " like winter leaves beneath a tree." I remember I was so impressed with her manner that I went down to the Government offices to repeat to my superiors what she had said. If I recollect right, she stated that the defeat had taken place on the previous day (January 22nd, 1879), but my late friend Sir Melmoth (then Mr.) Osborn pointed out to me that it was impossible that such tidings could have travelled two hundred miles or so in about twelve hours. Nevertheless, it proved perfectly correct. As to the method of its conveyance I hazard no opinion. The theory that intelligence is conveyed with extraordinary rapidity among the Bantu peoples by men calling it from height to height would, however, appear to be falsified by the fact that in this instance it must have come across the great plain of the high veld.

I am, Sir, etc.,

H. RIDER HAGGARD.

The successful news-collecting agency of which Abel Erasmus was the founder was the means of checking several attempts on the part of adventurers to run guns into the Magato country, the region in the north-east corner of the

Transvaal ruled for many years by a remarkable chief named Magato. This picturesque heathen, alone among the native rulers within the control and geographical influence of the South African Republic, had maintained absolute independence. He not only refused to acknowledge the Boer supremacy, but carried out his defiant attitude by refusing to pay hut tax, and forbidding right of entry to the country he called his own to any person of whom he disapproved.

About 1894 the late General Joubert was sent with a small escort on an attempt to persuade the truculent old chief to acknowledge the overlordship, or at least pay a bit on account of the arrears of hut tax.

"Are you Paul Kruger?" Magato demanded.

The general explained that he was a sort of chief induna to the President of the Republic.

"Go back and tell your chief that I am as great a chief as he is, and that if he wishes to have an indaba (discussion) he must come himself to see me. I do not talk to indunas."

That was all the general got and he had to be content. During the lifetime of Magato the Boers were fearful of undertaking a punitive expedition for two reasons; they had an exaggerated idea of the strength of the Magatese, and an equally erroneous impression as to the fever-ridden character of the country. In the late 'fifties a party of Boers founded a settlement there, but the majority of them were carried off by malaria, which is bad during the wet seasons in the districts near the Limpopo. The story of that plague has passed into a tradition, and did more to keep the country closed than the fear of the native inhabitants.

Despite the terror, a few bolder Boers did occasionally penetrate the recesses of the unknown and brought back attractive reports of the desirableness of the land. But it was not until Magato had died and been succeeded by his gin-sodden son 'Mpfeu that the Government took their courage in both hands and sent a commando to effect the submission of the new chief.

'Mpfeu and his followers belied in a contemptible manner the reputation of the Magatese as a fighting race. They fired a few shots, killed two members of the commando, and skedaddled ignominiously over the Limpopo. 'Mpfeu's fate is as uncertain as that of Lobengula. Like the great Matabele chief he is said to have surrendered his kingly state and to be living quietly among an alien race in the far north.

Among the other traditions current about the alluring and mysterious country during the life of Magato was one to

the effect that the chief was prepared to give a calabash of diamonds to any one who succeeded in running in a machine gun, which was the darling ambition of his life. As he grew older and noted the increasing efforts of the whites to get a footing in his country, Magato became obsessed with an invasion mania. He particularly feared the Boers. The fate of Malabock and one or two neighbouring chiefs who had been deposed by the Transvaal Government was always before him. He resolutely refused to receive any white man in his kraal, saying, " When White man comes in, Black man goes out." In order to avert his doom as long as possible he allowed no white to act as pioneer of the force that would some day oust him from the land of his many forefathers, and only encouraged visits from such whites as could assist him in laying in a stock of rifles and ammunition to enable him to meet his enemies on something like equal terms.

Of the ability of Magato to carry out his undertaking to pay in diamonds there was no suspicion. More than one man testified to having seen the stones. The amount varied between a pint and several gallons.

There was probability in support of the story. In the early days of Kimberley, and for five or six years until Magato forbade his young men to take employment in the mines, a large number of Magatese went to the diamond fields. There was no compound system in force then, and no Consolidated De Beers, but a score or more of independent mines and as many debris heaps being washed, so that the facilities for " finding " stones were numerous for a keen-eyed Kaffir. Native etiquette demands that a returning subject should make a present to his chief. Not unnaturally the gift of the mine boys took the form of a stolen diamond.

No one who knows the country and its conditions doubts that Magato had a valuable collection; the only question was how many. The Kruger Executive certainly believed in the existence of the treasure, for it has been admitted authoritatively that the main objective of the commando that frightened 'Mpfeu away was the diamonds. When the Hofstad was captured a vigorous search was made for the stones, and there are lurid stories of some of the departed chief's deserted wives being examined and and persuaded to assist in the search by tickling the soles of their feet until *they raved in hysteria. The treatment was a failure. It* produced no diamonds.

In connection with this incident it is worthy of note that the circumstance provided the writer with the only bit of

evidence that a long inquiry has produced as to whether the Kaffirs ever employed torture, as represented by a few writers.

It is generally believed, though on what authority is not clear, that Cetewayo tortured his brother Umbulazi to death by skinning alive and pegging him out over an ant hill, smearing the body with honey. Other writers, mainly fictionists, have introduced the subject and created an impression that this diabolical ingenuity in torment is or was a familiar native practice. Long and careful research has, with the solitary exception now to be narrated, brought no corroboration either of the ant torture or any other form as habitual at any period among the natives of South Africa.

While a Magatese woman was being treated in the manner described, an old Kaffir, a driver in the employ of the Boer commando, who was assisting by holding the victim, remarked :

" This is foolishness. She cannot say what she knows because the tickling makes her mad and she cannot talk. You should put her on an ant heap with her body rubbed with fat. The ants work slowly, so that she will have time to talk."

Unfortunately those present who heard the suggestion were not sufficiently interested in native manners and customs to follow up the matter by inquiring where the old Kaffir had seen or heard of his recipe. It may have been an experience, but it is quite as likely that the idea was conveyed to him in a question by a white man at some period.

The illicit supplying of arms to natives, colloquially known as gun-running, has for long been a recognised business, despite the risk and, what probably weighs little with adventurers who are not likely to suffer from the effects of a native rising, the serious moral aspect of the crime. At one time the various South African Governments could afford to regard the matter lightly. The guns supplied were almost invariably of the gas-pipe pattern, purchased in Birmingham wholesale at four and ninepence apiece, and much more likely to be dangerous to the user than to the person aimed at, particularly if the powder supplied with the burlesque guns had any driving force. But as this was of a quality in keeping with the " rifle," the Boer had little fear of a Kaffir with firearms. The assegai was a hundred times more potent.

The trade in gas-pipes and charcoal went on for many years, and more than one now respected and prosperous

South African importer has the reputation of having laid the foundation of his fortune on law-breaking.

But there came a time when the guileless savage could no longer be imposed upon with bogus rifles. The chiefs had seen the real thing and began to be connoisseurs in up-to-date firearms. The concession hunter who offered a gun as a bait to a chief had to satisfy him that it was really a gun. Magato became an expert judge of every kind of firearm, and before accepting one even as a compliment, submitted it to a prolonged series of trial tests that would have satisfied the most conscientious Government official selecting a new weapon for the use of the army.

It was Abel Erasmus who first pointed out to the Executive at Pretoria that the day of the gas-pipe was gone. In his capacity as Native Commissioner he made a surprise descent upon a remote Kaffir location and searched for arms. The result astonished and alarmed him. More than a hundred effective weapons of modern pattern were brought to light, and probably thrice that number remained concealed. The only consoling feature in the business was that the gun-runner could not resist his natural propensity for defrauding the native. The bulk of the cartridges supplied with good rifles were either filled with coal dust or were misfits.

Magato had long heard of the machine gun. The native version of Ulundi and the terrible execution wrought there upon the Zulus had impressed him greatly. A few years later he journeyed incognito to Portuguese territory on purpose to see for the first time a Gatling gun in possession of an advance post of the Delagoa Bay troops. He was fortunate in witnessing an exhibition of its capacity, paying for twenty goats to serve as targets at a range of 300 yards.

From that day Magato's sole ambition was to possess a machine gun, and many were the overtures made by unscrupulous whites. But Magato was a shrewd dealer. He wanted a better guarantee for delivery of the goods than the white adventurers could offer. It was in vain that they endeavoured to get something on account. The old man was adamant.

" If you can get a gun, you can get money to pay for it. When I see it at my kraal, and have killed twenty goats with it as I saw done by the Portuguese, then the calabash of stones is yours to choose from."

How many *bona fide* efforts were made to earn that calabash of diamonds will probably never be known, but two interesting cases are on record. The earliest was the Walters' expedition, which was engineered by an adven-

turous elderly Englishman who was among the diggers on the alluvial goldfield at Lydenburg in 1884. While there, he heard of Magato's offer. What steps he took to verify it do not appear, but he was apparently satisfied that the attempt was worth making, for he spent all that he had, some hundreds, in coming to England and getting a machine gun of the Gatling type manufactured. His cash running short, he was fortunate in finding a young man who had just come into a legacy. Him he enthused with the prospect of a speedy fortune, and the necessary money was put up to complete the gun, and, what was equally important and costly, to arrange for its transport to the kraal of Magato.

Walters appears to have been a man of ingenuity and resource. In order to divert suspicion in the event of discovery, the gun was got up to resemble a pump. A screw cap on the muzzle had some hose attached, and a piston and valves were provided, though, of course, not fitted. The general appearance of the machine would have deceived any casual examiner, who would have had no just ocular reason for suspecting that it was anything except what it was invoiced as—a pump for hydraulic mining. The terms of the purchase included a quantity of ammunition, and in the concealment of these Walters exhibited the adroitness of a Kimberley illicit diamond merchant. No attempt was made to conceal the gun beyond disguising its character, but the cartridges were not so easily misrepresented. The supposed pump was accompanied by an elaborately complex wooden arrangement of three-by-four-inch timbers. These were supposed to be the head-gear and framework for fixing the pump in position. The timbers were actually composed of half-inch boards, and contained 100,000 cartridges, which to, the credit of Walters' honesty, were genuine and guaranteed to "go off."

A safe passage was made to Delagoa Bay, where Walters and his partner landed, and, having satisfied the omnivorous Customs, engaged native carriers to transport the pump to Lydenburg via Steynsdorp. It was a roundabout way to Magato's kraal, but the only possible. Horse sickness and the tsetse fly rendered transport by other than carriers impossible, and, not being conversant with the native language, Walters had to engage a Portuguese agent to superintend the carriers. The second day out the agent demanded an advance on the sum agreed ; but Walters was not the man to be played with in this fashion. He knocked the man down, and having brought him to a condition of mingled fear and contrition, the journey was resumed. Next day three of the fifteen carriers

deserted, which gave the Portuguese a pretext for re-urging his demand for better terms on the grounds that the work was too hard for the natives, the parcels being, it was alleged, too heavy. By way of demonstrating its portability, Walters threw one of the bogus timbers across his shoulders, but in doing so brought it into sharp contact with a boulder. There was an ominous crack, and next instant a number of cartridges fell to the ground, and the rascally Portuguese was master of the situation.

Walters had to capitulate and agree to an advance, but the reserve fund was not equal to the strain put upon it. After parting with his ready cash and giving written authority for payment on a Delagoa house, Walters still found the man insatiable, so he relieved his exacerbated feelings with a sjambok applied to the agent and the native head-man, who sided with the mutineer, and bade the creatures clear out.

This they did, but they took all the carriers with them, leaving the gun-runners in a difficult part of the country encumbered with stores they were unable to move. Realising the probability of having the gun, which had cost so much, seized by the Portuguese officials, with whom their discharged agent had threatened to communicate, the pair made a supreme effort to hide it. They discovered a recess in the wall of a rocky ridge, filled it with brushwood, and fired it, making a bed of protective charcoal. In this they buried the gun and about 20,000 rounds of ammunition. The task occupied them several hours, but they did not hurry, Walters knowing well the lethargic character of Portuguese officials. For once this estimate proved fallacious. Some hours before they were expected, a captain and twenty mounted soldiers appeared, and the pair were marched back to a military station near the present site of Ressano Garcia. They were locked up in a filthy native hut, swarming with every kind of loathsome insect that a dirty Kaffir kraal is capable of producing, and suffered horribly for five or six days, when they were released, and bidden to march to Lourenço Marques. It took them four days to cover the fifty-six miles. They lived on raw mealies (maize) all the time, and arrived in such a condition of rags and dirt that they were arrested as suspected characters and lodged in jail until an English resident came forward and stood sponsor for their good name and conduct, and later assisted them to Cape Town.

Thirteen years afterwards one of the writers took part in an expedition organised by the partner of Walters to recover

the gun. Ten pleasant but strenuous days were spent in the search, but the guide could not recognise any reliable landmark. We found the remains of several articles which were identified as part of the stores of the unfortunate expedition, notably and strangely the vulcanite mouthpiece of a pipe, which was readily identified by the owner by peculiar teeth-marks. Part of the briar-root bowl lay near, bearing signs of having been bored through by ants or beetles until they reached the nicotine-impregnated portion. A pin passed into the holes showed that in no case had the perforations penetrated the nicotine-soaked wood. Acting on this hint of a check on the ravages of that scourge of Africa, the white ant, a series of experiments were made later by soaking wood in tobacco water. No white ant touched the preserved parts, but parts of the same piece not protected were bored through. We make a present of the suggestion to Colonials in search of a cure for the white ant plague.

The strangest find was an enamelled metal mug hanging on the branch of a sugar-bush. The branch had grown round the handle, which was embedded an inch and a half in the wood. We cut it away, and on cleansing the mug in hot water found it as white as when new. The partner remembered hanging up the mug on what was then a six-inch stump, and the occasion the second out-span after crossing the Transvaal border.

We made another curious find that gave us food for speculation after supper for several nights. Lying at the bottom of a shallow running stream, where it passed over bed-rock worn as smooth as paving stone, was a skeleton left hand and forearm, so small that they apparently had belonged to a child or woman. They were moored to the sandstone by a handcuff, one gyve locked round the wrist, the other partially cemented into the bed-rock. The cuff on the wrist was worn by the attrition of passing sand and pebbles to the thinness of a visiting card, and broke on being handled. The other was coated with a vegetable growth, which on being cleaned off revealed a manufacturer's mark, but, unfortunately, indecipherable.

The second dash for Magato's calabash was engineered by a once well-known character on the Rand, of whom many strange stories were told, much that was sensational suspected, but very little known. He was philosopher enough to realise that the most effective method of fighting calumny was not to deny a charge, but tacitly admit it. If sufficiently preposterous, it refuted itself in time, with the result that those who had believed found themselves mistaken or deceived,

and resolutely disbelieved any similar story in future through fear of ridicule.

There was not an adventurous and disreputable incident in the history of South Africa for a quarter of a century in which the Captain had not been suspected of taking a hand. To this day few men could safely undertake to prove the truth of any one of the sensational events with which the Captain has indisputably been associated. He is a genius at covering up his tracks and a marvel of courage in facing the music when suspected. More than once he has gone straight to the police office on returning from some adventure not sanctioned by the law, and demanded to know on what authority he was being talked about. His consummate capacity for bluff pulled him out of many a tight corner, as the story which follows proves.

In view of the elusive character of the hero, and bearing in mind the terms of our introduction of him to these pages, it may be well to preface the narration by the assurance that the leading facts were supplied to the writer by the Captain himself when under arrest at Pietersburg on suspicion of being concerned in the attempt to run a Maxim gun into Magato's country.

It was exactly a year before the introduction of Maxim guns into Johannesburg by the Raiders, but whence this particular Maxim came the chief actor in its importation would not say. He made its acquaintance at Delagoa Bay, where it arrived inside the specially constructed windchest of a large American organ consigned to the Captain, whose name for the purpose was David Hobson, and his business commercial traveller. Accompanying the organ was a parcel of illustrated catalogues of musical instrument dealers and a dozen of that favourite and aggressive toy of the Kaffir, the cheap German concertina.

There was no difficulty in getting the goods through to Barberton, the Customs officials at Delagoa accepting the declaration of the character of the goods without demur. Neither did the field cornets in the Transvaal dorps express surprise at the incongruous cargo until the road to the kraal of Magato had been more than half traversed by " Mr. Hobson's " wagon.

The average Boer is as curious and unreticent as a child when a stranger appears whose business and baggage are not obviously explanatory. So long as civilisation in the shape of a mining camp or a farmhouse lay ahead, Hobson's story that he was taking an organ to some Boer or Briton was accepted. The presence of the concertinas, which were

ostentatiously displayed, also lent colour to the fiction. But when the course steered showed the most dull-witted Boer that the objective of the traveller could not be either farm or mining camp the questions became embarrassing.

It was the season when many Boers trek from their winter quarters in the warm, low veld back to their farms on the higher ground ; consequently passers-by were more numerous than desirable. The Captain speaks the Taal and knows the Boer, an advantage that had its drawbacks, since he had no excuse for not joining in long conversations and answering the numerous awkward questions put as to his cargo, course and business.

By one of those dramatic coincidences usually confined to fiction and the stage, the great Abel Erasmus happened to be on the line of route, engaged in an investigation into a tribal fight or something a little bit out of the common. Now the Captain had good reason for not wishing to meet Abel, apart from the immediate cause. A year before he had roused the wrath of the irascible and domineering commissioner by carrying off a number of boys for work on the mines without consulting him. Some of the darkest chapters in the history of the Captain concerned his doings as a native labour agent. He was unscrupulous and successful, being able to recruit labour at times and under conditions that other less strenuous agents found impossible. There is reason to believe that his methods would scarcely meet with the approval of the Aborigines Protection Society, and it is certain that he was never able to revisit the scene of one successful recruiting.

When he heard that the native commissioner was expected to pass the night at the farm where the Captain had outspanned with the intention of doing the same thing, he committed a serious tactical error. He pretended to discover that he had left an important parcel at the last halting-place, ordered his horse to be saddled, and, ignoring the offers of his host to send a Kaffir, or even one of his sons, rode off into the veld on the backward track.

An hour later a Kaffir reported to the farmer that he had passed a white man preparing to camp out in a kloof less than a couple of miles distant and well off the road that the Captain should have taken if his journey had been genuine. When Erasmus arrived at sundown this item of news was communicated to him, and he announced his intention of detaining the wagon until the owner reappeared. He was suspicious of Rooineks who rode away as soon as they heard that he was coming, he said.

Meanwhile the Captain was marking time in the wooded kloof. He slept there during the night, and watched impatiently for signs of the passing of Erasmus. By noon hunger drove him to a distant native kraal, where he learned from Kaffir gossip that Abel was waiting at the farm for him. He got a messenger to carry a whispered instruction to his Kaffir wagon-driver to slip away after dark, bringing certain articles, and returned to the kloof.

The Kaffir appeared in due course, and the Captain proceeded to put into operation the scheme he had thought out in the solitudes of his waiting and watching. With an aniline pencil he covered his face, hands, arms and all the visible parts of his body with spots, then rode to his wagon. At daybreak his Kaffir, acting on instructions, went to the farmhouse and announced that his baas had been taken sick with the smallpox, and was going to move far away into the veld lest he gave the disease to others.

There is nothing earthly that the Boer fears more than smallpox. Had the Jameson Raiders entered the Transvaal in smallpox ambulance wagons, they could have passed through in safety.

When the party in the farmhouse received the message of the Kaffir, shouted from a safe distance, they yelled to the children to come indoors, and from the window thankfully watched the departure of the stricken Rooinek and his wagon. The Captain showed his disfigured face from beneath the wagon tilt, waved a feeble parting salute, and passed away with a chuckle at having again scored off the Rooinek-hating Abel Erasmus.

The smallpox trick answered admirably in keeping off undesirable visitors, white or black, but it had a disagreeable back-kick action. News travels fast in Kaffirdom, and whenever the wagon approached a native kraal it was warned off by assegai- and rifle-armed natives. It was only by boldly raiding the undefended kraals and mealie gardens that food could be obtained, the natives refusing to come near for the purpose of selling. A swoop on a kraal during the absence of the men on a beer-drink at a neighbouring kraal supplied the travellers with live fowls and mealies enough for a week, but the money left on a stone in payment remained there until a witch doctor had been called in to remove the "pokkies" from the coins, a ceremony which cost two-thirds of the sum disinfected.

But, although temporarily checked, Abel Erasmus, like the foiled villain of melodrama, metaphorically soliloquised in the Taal equivalent for "No matter; a time will come."

His emissaries were not only on the track, but well ahead of it. The Rooinek was kept under strict observation, for Abel had made up his mind that the wagon contained one thing he meant to get into his hands, and that was the Rooinek who had been recognised by half a dozen natives as the labour agent who a year before had practically kidnapped a party of boys under the very nose and in impudent defiance of the native commissioner, who had thereby been robbed of his commission of £1 per head. Hunger and fate were working silently on behalf of the vengeance-seeking Erasmus. A fortnight after the escape the Captain found his way barred by a petty chief, who not only refused to supply food, but threatened to shoot the oxen if they advanced or were outspanned anywhere in the wide district covered by the native location.

The Captain was put on his mettle. He sent the wagon back a mile or two, then rode boldly to the kraal and demanded an interview with the chief.

In the course of an hour he reaped the reward that generally awaits pluck and pertinacity. The chief consented to listen to what the Captain had to say.

The request was for food and the services of a guide to the edge of the Magato country, the payment to be one rifle and fifty rounds of ammunition. It was a tempting bribe, also a dangerous one. The chief asked for time to consider, and in this case the adage that asserts the man who hesitates is lost came true. The chief hesitated for half a day, then consented, and was lost.

So was the Captain. The wonderful eyes of Abel Erasmus, though eighty miles away, saw that rifle handed over in the gloom of the chief's hut, and his ears heard the instructions given to an old Kaffir to go with the white man as far as the river that was the boundary of the country of Magato.

The chief carried out his agreement, as Kaffirs of his class generally do, and the wagon was within a couple of treks of the promised land when a cloud of dust a mile or two behind signalled a fast-travelling party of horsemen.

Half an hour later the Captain was the prisoner of the native commissioner of the Lydenburg district, Abel Erasmus, and the charge was the serious one of supplying a native with firearms and ammunition contrary to the law.

The wagon was searched, the American organ opened in a manner that suggested that picks and shovels were employed in lieu of a screwdriver. Even the harmless concertinas were ripped up, but nothing incriminating was discovered.

For some reason not very clear the Captain was taken

to Pietersberg instead of the nearer Lydenburg. There he lay in the jail for a month, calm, serene and genial, popular with the jailer and sympathised with by every white man and woman in the dorp, not because of his offence, but for his charming personality. The women sent in food and the men stood him as many drinks as he would accept, when of an evening the jailer took his prisoner to the canteen for an hour or two.

Four months later the Captain turned up at his old haunts at Johannesburg, his "fit" appearance supporting his statement, in reply to inquiries, that he had been up country doing a little shooting and prospecting.

There is an interesting mystery surrounding the doings of the Captain during the two months that elapsed between his release from the jail at Pietersberg and his reappearance in Commissioner Street. The only thing certain is that there is no record of any prosecution of him for supplying arms to natives, or any other indictable offence. There is—or was, for he is lying on the field of Elandslaagte—a Boer official who, under the influence of wine, would take up the story and fill in the hiatus thus:

The Captain wrote to the State Secretary from Pietersberg telling him how he had been offered a calabash of diamonds by Magato's chief induna if he would procure a machine-gun. That he pretended to fall in with the offer, and procured a dummy gun, but was prevented from delivering it by the officiousness of Abel Erasmus. That he was prepared to go to Magato to verify the existence of the diamonds and glean certain information about a white man—a refugee from the Transvaal, wanted for murder—who was said to be acting as adviser to Magato and counselling an attack on the Boers.

The story goes on to tell how the offer was accepted; that the Captain visited Magato, found the white adviser there doing what was reported, and saw more raw diamonds than had ever been seen outside Kimberley.

The sequel came in 1897, when a commando was sent against the Magatese, and for the first time in their history collected hut tax from them.

"And what became of the gun, Captain?"

The Captain winked.

The "wonderful eyes" of Abel Erasmus were kept very wide open during the Boer War, particularly the latter period of it. They worried General Plumer much when he was clearing the northern Transvaal. The supposed neutral and British-loving Kaffirs of the district were to a man the loyal

agents of the great native commissioner who lay low in his stronghold making a bold but futile plan for provisioning the Ohrigstad valley, gathering there the surviving stalwarts and holding out until the British were compelled either to evacuate the land or offer favourable terms.

His minions carried his messages to every scattered commando; but the replies were chilling. The Boers whom he sought to convince of the excellence of his scheme knew more of British "stickatitness" than Abel did; they had been long, and still were, meeting and fighting them.

The refusal broke the spirit of the once ironclad Abel. He went in to Lydenburg, surrendered to the British commandant, and sent messages to his countrymen still in the field to go and do likewise.

This same Abel Erasmus who once boasted that no British Rooinek should ever enter his house is to-day a loyal British subject.

THE TREASURE TRAIN

By
CAPTAIN G. A. HILL

During 1917 the author was ordered to join the R.F.C. mission in Russia, where he joined forces with Colonel Boyle, who was there to assist in the co-ordination of transport. They had many adventures as agents working against the Germans and Austrians in Russia and were assisted by Joffe, the President of the Petrograd Military Revolutionary Committee.

OUR first visit on arrival in Petrograd was to Joffe, who told us of the progress which the Soviet Government had made since we were last in Petrograd.

They had established a full government. Comrade Nevski had been appointed Minister of Railways. A War Affairs Collegium had also been formed and he was certain that we could be of assistance both to Nevski and the War Collegium.

So we got into touch with Nevski and the War Collegium, to whom we were able to be of considerable use, at the same time contriving that the armies in the field continued to receive their supplies.

But the Bolsheviks feared the army and were in terror that it might be organised for use against them.

They had signed a ten days' truce with Germany. It began on December 5, 1917, and under its general terms the Central Powers agreed not to transfer German or Austrian troops from the eastern to the western front, though in fact the Germans did move several divisions from the Russian front to France before the end of the year. Meantime Krylenko had returned from Stavka and was conferring with Lenin. His return entirely changed the feeling among the members of the War Affairs Collegium, and on his advice the demobilisation of the army was determined on. Boyle and I were present at most of these sessions and fought them tooth and nail. We proved to them conclusively that the demobilisation of the army at this moment would culminate in an economic disaster of unparalleled magnitude. It would choke up the railways, it would add to the confusion existing in the area between the front line and the towns of Central Russia, and it would mean starvation in Moscow and

Petrograd. But it was all to no purpose. They were determined to have their own way, and on December 7, a general demobilisation order was circulated by wireless to all units on the front.

Subsequent events showed that Boyle and I were right, though we had not foreseen anything like the actual extent of the effects of the demobilisation order which was the main origin of the successive famines which for the next three years swept through Russia.

The Railway Minister and War Collegium having rejected our advice we changed our *point d'appui*, and were preparing to visit Rumania and the south-western front to see what could be done there, when the Rumanian Ambassador, M. Diamandi, asked us to call on him.

We found him in despair, not only because of the situation in Russia and the immediate prospect of war between Rumania and the Soviets, but also because of the state of affairs in Rumania itself.

"I tell you, Colonel, the position is desperate—desperate. In Rumania there is no money. You know that when Bucharest fell we sent our gold reserve, the crown jewels, the Foreign Office archives and our reserve of paper currency for safe keeping to the Kremlin. It is still in Moscow, and now that the Bolsheviks have seized and nationalised everything and are forcing this war upon us we will lose the very last of our resources. We have not even a printing press in Jassy capable of printing paper money. *Mon Dieu*, it is appalling."

The Colonel grunted enigmatically.

"If only a part of that treasure could be returned to Jassy, what a relief to my poor country," continued the minister.

Boyle looked at me, and I looked at Boyle. The same idea had occurred to both of us. "Well, why not?" we said.

The minister leapt to his feet. "If you gentlemen succeed you will be our saviours. If you say it can be done I know it will be done."

We explained that we did not share his confidence in the certainty of our success, but that we were prepared to do our best if he would undertake the responsibility of giving authority for the treasure to be handed over to us for transport to Jassy.

M. Diamandi was nominally in complete charge of this treasure, and he hastened to give instructions to the Rumanian authorities in Moscow that the valuables in question were to be handed over to us, if we on our part were able to persuade the Soviet authorities to allow them to go out of their charge.

That evening we left for Moscow. I felt that it was time that I propitiated the hostility of Ivan, our conductor, for although we had now made three trips in number 451, the tall, elderly man of the white beard and venerable physiognomy remained surly and aloof. I knew that beneath that forbidding manner he must have a good character, for the Provodnik, as conductors are called in Russia, of the Empress's carriage would have been specially selected. I wandered along to his pantry, where I was received very ungraciously. The conductor was a Royalist, who loathed the Bolsheviks and looked down upon any one who was not of the Blood Royal. Nor had he a very high opinion of the new foreign tenants of his beloved 451. I tried to get into conversation with him, and he answered me in monosyllables. "No, yes, no. No, I don't drink. I am of the sect of Old Believers. We don't touch alcohol." I knew that he was wondering all the time what my little game was, but I refused to take a rebuff. Presently he asked me if he could take two pieces of sugar a day from our stores. Sugar was terribly scarce and expensive in those war days and beyond Ivan's means. Gladly I gave my permission. I had penetrated his armour—I had found his weak spot—he had a sweet tooth. Forthwith I returned to my coupé, and took out of my kit a large slab of chocolate which I carried along to the pantry.

I had always found the value of including in my kit a certain amount of good plain chocolate, half a dozen pairs of ladies' silk stockings and two or three boxes of the more expensive kind of Parisian toilet soap. My experience was that, presented at the psychological moment, they would unlock doors which neither wine nor gold would open.

Ivan's eyes gleamed. "For me?" he said.

"If you will accept it."

From that moment Ivan was my friend. He was always crotchety, but his manner hid a fiercely loyal heart of gold.

In Moscow the Rumanian authorities looked askance at M. Diamandi's order that the Rumanian treasure was to be handed over to us, and put every difficulty in our way.

"Where's the stuff?" we asked.

"The crown jewels are in the Kremlin vaults, the royal jewels in the state bank vaults, and so is the paper currency."

"What is the value of the paper currency?"

"One hundred million lei" (£4,000,000 at par), said the nervous official; "and, anyway, the Bolshevik canaille will never let any of it go."

"That is our business. You get through to M. Diamandi in Petrograd by telephone, or you will be sorry."

Off we went to interview Muralov, the Bolshevik commander of Moscow.

Muralov was genuinely delighted to see us and welcomed us very heartily, for had we not alone and unaided averted the threatened famine by opening the Moscow Knot, and were we not even now keeping the transport system of Russia in operation? Not only was he grateful, but he trusted us.

"Well, we have helped you," said we, "and now, for a change, with your assistance we are going to help Rumania." We told him the truth without any beating about the bush. We wanted to remove the Rumanian jewels, the paper money, the Foreign Office archives and some Red Cross stores from Moscow to Jassy. Muralov's reply was the Russian equivalent of, "Well, I'll be damned!"

A lengthy discussion ensued, and finally Muralov said that the authority did not rest with him, but that he would give us his decision on the morrow. When we called the next day, with a twinkle in his eye he gave us written permission to take everything we asked, with the exception of certain treasures stored in the Kremlin vaults.

I do not think that Muralov had acted on his own. I imagine that he had instructions from the People's Commissars at Petrograd, to make Boyle and myself happy by this concession. Not that they supposed, for one moment, that they would be involved in any loss, or that we would get to the frontier with skins and treasure intact. But if a couple of mad Englishmen were bent on the experiment, it was their own business.

Half a loaf is better than no bread, and we returned to the Rumanian officials in a state of considerable elation. They simply could not believe their eyes when they read Muralov's permits.

It would, of course, be impossible to obtain an escort which would be adequate to guard that vast treasure. Between Moscow and Jassy we must pass through a country overrun by civil war, and our journey would probably take us through five or six fighting fronts. A glance at the map will show that actually we passed through seven separate battle areas.

Through these fighting areas a certain number of trains continued to make their way, but without any regularity. Once or twice a week a post train, which stopped at every station and took anything up to ten days to do the journey, would leave Moscow for Odessa or Jassy. On one of these post trains we decided to hitch our saloon and as many trucks as

would be necessary. Our one hope of success was to convey that vast treasure as casually and informally as possible.

We explained to the Rumanian officials that the archives would be packed at once in two railway trucks, the Red Cross stores in two other trucks, and that these four wagons would be hitched to our special carriage, in which we would also take the 100,000,000 lei and the jewels.

"How are the jewels packed?" we asked.

"In steel cases."

"Very well," we said; "the steel cases will be brought to the Rumanian Red Cross warehouse which is under your charge, and the contents there be repacked into ordinary wicker baskets."

"Does untold wealth travel about in wicker baskets?" squeaked the Rumanian.

"It does not!"

"Well?"

"Well! that is why we are going to carry it that way."

The Rumanian lost his nerve.

"I must get instructions from the government at Jassy."

"Go ahead," said I—I did not speak Rumanian, so our conversation was conducted in German. "But remember, the treasure has been handed to us by the Bolsheviks and we shall do as we like."

A few hours later he informed us that the Rumanian Government had instructed him to hand everything over to us, but that they had suggested we should take with us two Rumanian Treasury officials, who were then in Moscow.

"Very well," I said; "but tell them that they won't be comfortable."

Later this timid official also asked us if we would take back to Rumania eighteen Rumanian soldiers who had been acting as guards to the Rumanian Red Cross depot. As there would be sufficient room for them if huddled close together in one of the wagons containing the Red Cross stores we naturally agreed.

Reluctantly the Rumanians repacked the contents of the steel cases into ordinary wicker baskets.

The trucks containing the Red Cross stores and the Foreign Office archives were coupled to our carriage, which was to be attached to a post train. Everything was ready.

II

THE following day I started out with sledges to collect the wicker baskets, and was to arrive back at the station twenty minutes before the train was due to depart, which would just give us time to take the treasure aboard. Boyle and his interpreter, Sandy, a charming Russian officer who spoke perfect English, remained at the station.

It was a golden afternoon, and everything worked smoothly. The sledges were loaded and I was ready to move off. " Go," said I to the leading driver, and as I spoke, behold, eighteen Rumanian soldiers with fixed bayonets distributed themselves round the sledges, and two beaming gentlemen, one tall and thin, the other short and fat, emerged from the building and joined us.

" This is ludicrous," I protested. " Why have an armed guard? The Soviets are on the eve of war with Rumania. The light green uniform of your soldiers is likely to act on the mob like a red rag to a bull."

" But monsieur has so kindly promised to take these men on their leave," blandly remarked the tall man ; " they must naturally march to the station. Go ahead? Come after? *Mais mon, monsieur le capitaine, it is* impossible."

It was now clear to me that the Rumanian had lied when he asked us to take some soldiers back to Rumania—as they were no longer required. It was nothing of the kind. It was an armed guard for the treasure.

I pictured Boyle's face if, owing to this argument, we arrived late and missed the train ; I pictured our march through the mob-infested streets with our fabulous wealth and that guard simply asking for trouble. But there was nothing for it. I shrugged my shoulders, wrote a protest in my Field Book, made the senior Rumanian sign it, and off moved my cavalcade ten minutes behind scheduled time.

That walk stands out as the longest, most slippery and most anxious of my life. Three times we were stopped by Bolshevik patrols :

" Comrades, what carry you there? "

" Stores," I answered to the challenge, and the reply got us safely to the station.

Boyle, tremendously anxious, was at the entrance. I will never forget his face, nor the strength of the language which he used. It was not a habit of his.

" What the —— are you doing with that —— guard? "

Explanations were useless. I showed him my Field Book which the Rumanian had signed.

"You did quite right, Podge." He always called me Podge when he was excited. "I'll take charge of the baskets. Make those men put their rifles on the sledge and send them back where they came from. The soldiers can travel unarmed." Then looking at the Treasury officials with dislike, he added, "And for God's sake get rid of those two fools."

Politely I told the fat and the thin Rumanian to get into the station. Then we started to transfer the wicker baskets one by one into number 451.

"Mind my carpets," growled Ivan.

"Your carpets be damned!" said I. "Get these baskets into the coupés as quickly as possible."

The jewellery and the paper money completely filled three or four coupés from floor to ceiling, which meant that I had to turn out of mine and sleep in the dining-saloon, and this fact did not add to my good humour.

The Rumanian Treasury officials, whom from the moment I first saw them I had named A. and O., proved a tremendous nuisance and wanted to count each basket as it came in, and separate the jewels from the paper money. It must be remembered that we were moving this vast treasure without any guard, since our surest way of doing so safely was by not attracting attention. Finally, in despair I locked A. and O. up, much to their annoyance, in the coupé which we had put at their disposal.

Then when everything was safely aboard an argument commenced outside the carriage.

"Our goods wagons," said Ivan, appearing from his pantry, "are being uncoupled." He spoke with relief, for he disapproved of trucks, especially of these into which the whole leave party had been dumped. "What would the excellent one"—he always gave me that title—"like me to do?"

"Send for the station-master."

Arguing with an official is always a difficult matter, and especially if the official happens to be a Russian station-master. I argued and expostulated on the platform, for naturally I did not want him in our carriage, and the usual crowd collected round us.

"Post trains never carry trucks," he said in a surly fashion.

"This one does," said I, and at that moment a new Bolshevik Station Commissar, an unkempt Jewish ruffian, appeared.

"What's all this about?" he demanded. The matter was

explained to him. He scratched his head for a moment. "The wagons are to be attached. Get the train off."

Amazed at this unexpected decision so quickly made, our interpreter caught my eye and negligently followed the Commissar and the station-master as they walked down the platform. The departure bells rang, the train jerked forward, our journey had begun.

Sandy swung aboard as we cleared the platform.

"We are to be allowed to go fifty miles down the line," he said. "The Commissar is telegraphing instructions for the wagons to be detached there. He says: 'The fools of bourgeois will be asleep by then.'"

We looked meditatively at the roof of the saloon in which we were standing.

"Hill," said Boyle, "you and I are going to have a nasty time up there," and he smiled happily.

III

OUR train crawled along slowly. It was heavy and long, the engine was old and dilapidated and was burning damp wood. We estimated that it would take us about three hours to reach the spot where the wily Commissar proposed to unhitch our wagons.

In the middle of that cold and dark night, when we judged the time to be ripe, Boyle and I stepped out on the running board and then scrambled to the carriage top, and lying flat on our stomachs awaited events.

At last we pulled up at a tiny wayside station, where we were halted for some minutes. Just as the train was starting a ruffianly figure, unshaven, unkempt and filthy, stole along and uncoupled the wagons. We dropped quietly to the ground and crept up one on each side; then in the darkness of the night the Colonel's fist crashed out and the man went down like a log. Hastily we recoupled the trucks and the train moved forward, dragging our four wagons along with it.

Throughout the night we watched lest a further attempt at uncoupling should be made. But whether it was that the people at the station which we had left imagined that the trucks were still standing in the darkness there, or that it was too much trouble to telephone the next station, no other attempt was made to molest us that night.

The train went ambling on through the snow-covered countryside at about ten miles an hour. This speed does not indicate our real rate of progress, however, for we sometimes

spent hours at small stations waiting for engines, waiting for fuel, waiting for engine-drivers. Whenever we did stop at a station it was the signal for a free fight. The carriages were packed with travellers as tight as they could be and humanity swarmed on the top of every car except our own, from which we ejected all invaders, sometimes not without force. This work had to be done by Boyle and myself. The two Rumanians were useless, and we could not call on Sandy to help us as, the murder of Russian officers being a national pastime, we did not dare to let any one catch sight of him. For ten days Boyle and I never removed our clothes. We took turns for sleeping but we were both always up at every station or stop.

At Briansk we ran into a battle which was being fought between the troops of the Soviet Republic and those of the Ukrainian Rada.

The Soviet troops were trying to capture Briansk station, which was being defended by the Ukrainians with machine-guns, reinforced by a couple of armoured cars. Both sides fired indiscriminately at the train. There were no killed, but about forty people were wounded. For the first time our train moved like an express, and we shot past that station and did not pull up until we had passed it by three or four miles. Two of our windows had been smashed and the side of the car marked by bullets, but thanks to the steel walls we had been comparatively safe.

That night, when I was on duty, I observed a glare in the sky and judged that there was trouble ahead. The country into which we had now passed was in the hands of the Soviets. As we approached nearer to the glare I found that it was caused by a vodka factory which had been accidentally set on fire by looters during a debauch. Our train lurched to a halt, and instantly a swarm of people emerged from the carriages and made for the factory.

It was a weird sight, the blazing factory, the snow-covered fields and the hundreds of people rushing across from our train to get a little vodka for themselves. The crowd burst open the warehouse, and men came staggering out from its doors carrying six or seven bottles of vodka. Many of them could not wait until they got back to the train, but knocked off the head of a bottle and drank as they came. When after an hour we moved forward we had hundreds of drunken men aboard.

The following morning, when we pulled into one of the larger stations, a grey, old wooden ramshackle building, the train was surrounded by a detachment of Bolshevik troops, while a Commissar at the head of a search party and an armed guard began a systematic search of the train. Stepping on to

the platform I walked up to the end of the train at which he had begun and noted that he was doing his work very thoroughly, and that he was an aggressive type of bully. I went back to report to the Colonel and we ordered Sandy and A. and O. to go to their bunks and to remain there without talking or even daring to cough. I took the further precaution of locking their coupé doors with my pass-key.

By the time the Commissar, at the head of his party, had arrived at our carriage, I had decided that a good bluff represented our only hope of safety, and I gave the Commissar the best salute I could muster, and gravely shook hands with him.

" You cannot bring your party into our carriage. We are a Foreign Mission and are not subject to search. By doing so you would violate the exterritoriality convention which exists between our country and the Soviet Republic." A bit of me inside chuckled, for I knew that our government was most unlikely to recognise the Soviet Government for many years to come, and for us to claim exterritoriality in our position was really the height of impudence.

The Commissar hesitated for a moment. Then his jaw set. He felt very strongly that it was his duty to search our carriage.

" My friend," I said, " you will be doing a great wrong if you do come in, and our country will never forgive the insult."

" What is your country ? " he asked.

To say that we were English would not help us, for at that time our country was neither popular nor very much respected in Russia, so I replied. " We are the Canadian Mission."

" Canadian—Canadian. Is that the American Republic ? " asked the simple Commissar.

" Yes, rather ! " I replied. " Now look here, come in and see Colonel Boyle, the head of the Mission. I know that he will be very glad to make your acquaintance, but you must leave your detachment here on the platform and I will send them some Canadian cigarettes." The Commissar stepped in, while I distributed packets of Gold Flake among the soldiers, who apparently found " Canadian " cigarettes very much to their taste.

I introduced the Commissar to Boyle, produced brandy, bread, ham, sausage and butter and we had, much to Ivan's anger, an informal meal. I was afraid that Ivan might let his feelings get the better of him, and went along and explained that what we were doing was absolutely necessary. He shook his head and said in a low tone, " If only the Commissar would touch the Colonel I would be glad, for the Colonel would kill him with a blow, and that would be good, except

if the pig bled on my carpets." The Colonel and I had let Ivan into the secret of what we were carrying, for we knew that was the safest way of securing his help and co-operation ; indeed, once he realised that we were carrying royal treasure back to the King and Queen of Rumania he ranked us with peers of the realm at least. Ivan knew the pedigrees of the royal families of Europe backwards—their names, their marriages and their relationships. He knew infinitely more about the royal house of Windsor than I did, and spoke of King George, the Royal Family and their relations as if they were personally known to him.

Our conduct, supplemented by the effects of brandy, food and cigarettes, finally allayed the Commissar's suspicions and he rose to depart and took leave of Boyle with much clicking of heels. But when we had passed into the corridor of the carriage he turned to me and said, " And you have this beautiful carriage all to yourselves ? May I just look in at this coupé ? " putting his hand on the door of one which contained the baskets of treasure.

" Of course," said I. He opened the door.

" What is this ? "

" Baskets," I replied.

" Baskets ? " said he, with suspicion in his voice.

" Yes," I said ; " with decorations."

" Decorations ? " he queried.

" From the President of the American Republic for Russian and Rumanian soldiers." I made my voice as impressive as possible.

The Commissar positively beamed at me, and naïvely asked whether I thought that I could get him an American decoration as he would very much like to have one. I said that I could not possibly promise, but that I would telegraph to the President from Kieff. He shook me warmly by the hand. " Please, please do."

At last he was out of our carriage, and a few minutes later the train moved on.

It had been a very narrow escape. Once the true character of our cargo was known it was a hundred to one that we should be held up and robbed of it. Even in a law-abiding country that treasure would have been a fine prize and an irresistible temptation for a gang of enterprising thieves.

Early next morning, when we were about 120 miles from Kieff, our train stopped in the middle of a forest. There was nothing unusual in this, for it had the habit of stopping at all sorts of queer places, but when at the end of an hour we showed no signs of moving I went along to investigate. The

snow around the railway track was five and six feet deep, and it was no easy task to get through to the engine, where I learned from the driver that the engine had broken down, but that he was confident that in two or three hours he would be able to make the necessary repairs.

I think I should explain here that there was no traffic on the lines, as communications had almost entirely broken down by this time. Thus we ran little risk of trains running into us, but at the same time we could not hope that a train might come along from Kieff to take messages to the nearest station or assist us in repairing our damaged engine. We had to do the best we could ourselves.

I was anxious. The black clouds were threatening snow. I had no desire to be snowed up. Indeed, it was by the merest chance that two days before we had come through this part of the country a snow-plough engine had cleared the tracks for a Bolshevik troop train.

A few hours later I returned to the engine. The repairs were going along famously, and a little later the engine-driver was satisfied that we could go on. But now the stoker had his little difficulty. He had kept steam up as long as he could, but had run completely out of fuel and the steam pressure was rapidly falling in the boilers.

" What can we do ? " I asked.

" Nothing," replied the engine-driver and stoker together.

Somewhere and somehow we must find fuel. Was there anything in the neighbourhood which could be used as such ? Boyle and I climbed on to the cab of the engine and surveyed the country around us. About three-quarters of a mile away we saw that there had been a clearing made in the forest, and we told the engine-driver to do his best to get us as far as that. He did his best, but when the train came to a stop again it was still some hundreds of yards short of it. Boyle and I went along and reconnoitred. Luck was with us, for the crust of snow was hard enough to bear our weight, and at the very edge of the forest in the clearing we found that there were some stacks of sawn and split logs. Back we went to the train and called a meeting of passengers, to whom we explained that as the steam-heating could not be kept up they would all be frozen during the night and that somehow or other the timber would have to be fetched. The passengers saw the point at once, and we organised a living chain party which started to pass logs back to the engine tender. Some of the men were almost up to their armpits in the soft snow as they passed logs for all they were worth. I suppose the chain consisted of some four hundred men and it was rather an

inspiring sight. Soon the tender was piled high with wooden logs. Snow was used to replenish the water supplies, and sufficient pressure raised in the boilers to enable us to resume our journey.

IV

And so at last we reached Jamerinka some forty miles away from the Bessarabian frontier.

All the troubles we had so far encountered had been fortuitous. Now that we had reached the last stage of our journey we might expect to encounter organised opposition and a serious attempt to take the treasure from us.

Sandy and Captain Y. had got out a large-scale map and were ticking off the miles and working out the hour at which we should arrive at Jassy, where they planned a reunion lunch at the house of Captain Y's friends.

" Don't you be so sure that we shall ever get to Jassy," said the Colonel. " Our real troubles are ahead of us." And so it proved to be.

At Jamerinka we were not visited by a Commissar, an event so unusual as to fill me with deep suspicion. We were being left alone. To a man who knew Russia that was not a good sign. Our train moved on and reached Vapnyarka At Vapnyarka a nervous station-master entered our carriage.

" Orders have been given that no train is to leave for Bessarabia, and that your carriages are to be shunted to a siding," and without more ado he proceeded to carry out the orders in question.

After a short time the passengers came to the conclusion that the Bolsheviks had meant what they said and that there would be no train for Bessarabia, and accordingly took themselves off to the village either to put up there or to hire horses and sledges which would take them on their way.

Meanwhile I went to the station-master's office, where I adopted a high-handed manner and demanded an engine. And at that very moment a Bolshevik general turned up accompanied by his staff.

" You are under arrest," he said.

" You must be mistaken," I replied. " We have a mandate from Joffe," and produced the document.

He merely glanced at it and returned it with a contemptuous raise of the shoulders.

" We have no desire to examine your carriage or your trucks," he told me. " But you will not be allowed to continue

your journey. Your Mission is covered by two batteries of guns eight hundred yards away, and if you attempt to move they will open fire."

"When will we be allowed to go?" I demanded.

"I don't know, perhaps never," replied the rabid general. "We know you are stealing something from Russia to give to Rumania."

"Come and have some tea," said I, but he refused and repeated that he would carry out his orders if we tried to move.

I went back to our coupé. We decided that for the moment we could do nothing, and that we must play for time. So Captain Y., Sandy and I passed the time with picquet and drank hot tea.

Then we heard the noise of an engine exhaust. Somewhere in the station yard there was an engine with steam up, and I went to investigate. It appeared that under the old règime a shunting engine had been kept on duty at this station throughout the twenty-four hours, and as no one had ever countermanded the order, despite the fact that there was really nothing to shunt, there the engine had always remained with steam up. I made friends with the driver and fireman, gave them cigarettes, and took some food along to them from our carriage. They proved friendly, and utterly tired of the conditions under which they were living, and they had many tales to tell of their hardships. Boyle and I decided that some time that night we would commandeer the shunting engine and make an attempt at escape.

Our first step was to send Sandy along to the station-master's office to create a row and to demand further interviews with the authorities. He was also told to find out where the station telephone and telegraph lines were connected on the station. While he was doing this Captain Y. and I went off to reconnoitre the position of the batteries, and found them with their guns trained on the station sure enough. Some of the gun crews were standing by, while the remainder were huddled round a miserable camp-fire.

V

AGAINST that eerie background we were working out our plan of campaign. At midnight we were to turn out all the lights in the carriage, at one o'clock action was to commence. Sandy was to cut the telephone and telegraph wires which we had marked, and then with his revolver to cover the door of the waiting-room in which the guard was

gathered. If any one were to come out and give the alarm he was to shoot and keep the door covered at all costs. For this purpose we gave him two extra automatics and an ample supply of ammunition.

Captain Y. was to stand by the carriage and act as a support to Sandy if anything happened to him.

Boyle and I were to capture the shunting-engine, force the crew to back it on to our carriage and compel them to take us over the frontier.

In the meantime Sandy and I went out to collect two or three strands of long rope which Boyle wanted for some purpose of his own.

By one o'clock a gale was raging. The howling wind caught up the snow on the ground and drove particles of frozen ice into our faces and eyes. We waited until Sandy had cut the wires and taken up his post opposite the waiting-room door, then with drawn revolvers Boyle and I boarded the engine simultaneously. The stoker was raking the fire and so had his back to us. The driver was dozing, his head resting between a pressure-gauge and a box. He awoke with a start. The stoker spun round. They found themselves looking into the muzzles of our revolvers. We told them what was required of them. We promised to pay them a substantial sum of money and obtain permission for them to live in Rumania. And at last they agreed to run the engine for us.

The fireman went off to set the points, and Boyle went with him, revolver in hand. I remained with the engine-driver and told him that at the slightest sign of treachery I would fill him with lead.

The points were set. Very slowly and silently we ran down the line, but to me it seemed as if we were making a terrible clatter. The howling wind was, however, our ally. The engine-driver backed gently—very gently—on to faithful 451. The coupling took three or four minutes, as the irons and the brake attachments had become frozen, and we had to pour boiling water over them in order to loosen them without making any noise. At last we were hitched on.

A low whistle from Boyle and Sandy ran up.

"All correct, sir."

"Thank you," said Boyle. "Get aboard."

I remained on the engine. I had been carefully watching the driver during the manœuvre and knew that if it came to a pinch I would be able to take control. We were off. Would the batteries fire?

Over on the left I could see the glow of the camp-fires round the batteries; but not a shot was fired.

As we cleared the station I saw the waiting-room door open and two or three men come out and run along the platform. It was bitterly cold, but it was excitement and not the frost which caused my teeth to chatter. Boyle had ordered that we should stop when we had covered ten miles, and we pulled up at a spot even more desolate and windswept than the station itself.

" I am not going to take a chance," said Boyle. " We must destroy the telegraph wires. That is why I wanted the rope."

In the wind we found it no easy task to throw the rope over the telegraph wires which were suspended some thirty feet high on their wooden posts. Finally however, by tying weights to the ends of the rope we managed to get three or four strands over, only to find that all our combined efforts coud not snap the wires. Then the stoker came to the rescue with the suggestion that we should tie the rope to the engine-tender. The wires parted with a clang and we were on our way again.

But we had taken too long, and the people at the station had managed to get a message through. Twenty minutes later we saw ahead of us red lights being frantically waved in the darkness, and as we slowed down we made out that the gates at the level crossing had been closed to bar our way.

" Go through them," I said to the engine-driver.

" I dare not, sir ; it is too risky ! "

I gently prodded his ribs with my revolver. " Go on," I said.

" Even if you shoot me I won't do it. I am responsible for the lives in the train as well as myself."

I knew that he was right and I knew that I was right. I turned towards him and brought my knee sharply into the pit of his stomach. He rolled on the floor of the engine in agony.

I grabbed hold of the lever, pushed it forward and opened the throttle to its full. Wind, particles of snow and flying cinders stung my eyes and made them water. Gaining speed with every second we charged straight at the gates, and smashed into them with a crash. There was a horrible jerk, while I wondered whether we were going to leap the line, and then the good old shunting-engine carried everything before it in its stride. On through the night we rushed.

Presently the engine-driver recovered.

" You are driving too fast," he said ; " we are nearing a dangerous curve. Let me take charge," and my short career as an engine-driver was over.

"We must be near the Rumanian outposts now," muttered the engine-driver, and almost as the words left his lips there was a terrific grinding, the engine rocked and swayed and after a moment came to a standstill against a mound which the Rumanian outpost had piled over the line as protection. Ahead of us the outpost opened fire. I crouched down in the engine-cab until the fire ceased and yelled, "We are friends," and explained to a Rumanian officer that we were an Allied Mission.

Our nine days' journey was over. The treasure was safe. On Christmas Eve we arrived at Jassy. From the frontier A. and O. had telegraphed the news to the Treasury that they and the treasure were in our care. As we pulled into the station two hundred and fifty railway gendarmes closed round the small train of four wagons and our special saloon. A detachment of cavalry surrounded the gendarmes in order to safeguard in Rumanian territory the national treasure which without escort had been brought all the way from Moscow through a lawless contryside overrun by civil war. A. and O. were very happy. They felt that at last their priceless charge was being treated with the respect due to it. Boyle looked at me sardonically and smiled.

The Rumanian Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Railway Minister were on the station to welcome us. Half an hour later we were receiving the congratulations and thanks of the Prime Minister, M. Bratiano.

That evening we returned to 451 and made a good supper of the cold turkey Boyle had brought from Kieff. Then at last we were able to take off our clothes for the first time for ten days, and fall into an untroubled sleep.

In recognition of this service H.M. the King of Rumania conferred on Colonel Boyle the Grand Cross of the Crown of Rumania, and on me the Order of the Star of Rumania. For a subsequent service Boyle received the Grand Cross of the Star of Rumania while I received the Order of the Crown of Rumania. It was not until a year after the conclusion of hostilities that I actually received these decorations, when on a visit to Bukarest I was publicly invested with the Crown. But H.M. Queen Marie, with a kindness which I immensely appreciated, summoned me to the Kotrechinie Palace and in the course of a personal and informal audience decorated me with the Order of the Star.

SECRETS OF THE FRENCH FOREIGN OFFICE

By

I. J. T. LINCOLN

BEFORE I proceed with my narrative I must introduce two interesting persons, both of whom played a very important part as sources of secret diplomatic intelligence in what is to follow :

" My Readers—Mademoiselle Céleste."

" My Readers—Monsieur Legrange."

Mademoiselle, I met at Ostend—the rendezvous of the upper 10,000 in summer, the queen of the watering places, gay, fashionable Ostend. It was in 1906. I often spent my week-ends there, not only to seek recreation and divertissement from the week's work, but principally on the look-out for a female secret agent. I was looking out for one of those demi-mondaines who combine to a remarkable degree intelligence, wit, shrewdness, and spirit of adventure with superb physical beauty. You find in Ostend during July and August (not since 1909 when the gaming laws were rigidly enforced) the leaders of the demi-monde, those who in the late fall are in Paris ; in winter, in Nice and Monte Carlo ; in the spring, in Algiers ; and in the summer, in Ostend or Trouville.

I have met several of them ; but alas, when I put them through the various tests, they were all found wanting. At last my chance came, for chance it was. One afternoon I went into the superb Kursaal (the finest in the world) of Ostend and straightway I steered towards the club privée, under which pseudonym the gambling rooms have to be understood. This had to be done in order to circumvent the Belgian gaming laws. Nobody except members could gain admission—but everybody could become a member. So this day I went in, always looking out for a suitable medium—for I had important work in hand for which a female spy was indispensable.

There was only one roulette table in Ostend and that one without zero. At all the other tables, *baccarat à deux tables* was being played. The roulette was merely there to draw the crowd—it was only open three times a day, one hour each time, the rest of the time one had to play baccarat. So this

day when I got to the roulette table there was not only no seat to be had, but a crowd three deep was surging right round the table. I took up my position at the near corner behind a lady and a gentleman.

"*Faires vos jeux, Messieurs, le jeu est fait, rien va plus*"—around went the ivory ball. I could not take part in the game, could simply not get anywhere near enough. The lady and gentleman in front of me—whom I thought were together—staked and lost. Again and again.

"*Rien va plus,*" sounded the monotonous and mechanical invitation of the croupier.

"*Mettez votre argent sur le deux,*" ventured I forth with my advice to the lady in front of me.

She turned around—great Scott! what a beauty! and when she plaintively asked, "*Croyez vous que je gagnerais,*" with a melancholy look in her charming blue eyes, I thought I felt an electric shock. She followed my advice and she won! Strange coincidence.

Now she turned to me for further advice.

"*Le neuf!*" said I convincingly.

She staked and won again. Many noticing my strange powers of prophecy, now eagerly asked me for a tip!

"*L'onze,*" I said as if I had been a real prophet.

Truth is stranger than fiction. My third number won. Never in all my gambling experience had I myself spotted three numbers in succession. I now advised my follower to stop and leave the table. I myself felt compelled to leave it—for my renown as a prophet soon spread right around the table and the notoriety thus gained became decidedly embarrassing. I sauntered out, went into the large baccarat room, and did not notice at all that I was followed by Lady Beauty.

"*Monsieur, je dois vous remercier bien vivement, mais quelle chance.*" She said this so nicely, accompanied by a bewitching smile and enchanting twinkle in her eyes that I felt amply repaid for my jocular advice.

"*Vous avez bien fait de discontinuer de jouer—et votre ami?*"

"*Le qui?*"

"*Le Monsieur à côté de vous.*"

"*Lui? Il n'est pas mon ami, je ne le connais pas.*"

Oho! that was good information. Right away I invited her to tea, which she accepted.

We sat down to a table near the glass door looking out on the light-green North Sea and facing the orchestra; there was, just then, the daily organ recital.

She called herself Céleste. Céleste, the Charming. For such was she. Of charming figure, golden blonde, sparkling

blue eyes, and the daintiest hands I have ever set my eyes upon. A fluent and entertaining conversationalist, chittering like a happy young bird under a blue sky, full of vivacity, verve and playfulness. She was my guest at dinner; I met her next day and we spent the day together; that was Sunday. I had to return to Brussels but promised to see her next Saturday. As a matter of fact I went out to Ostend on Wednesday afternoon. I was anxious to find out whether she was the much sought agent.

I was not in a hurry to make up my mind; a wise selection meant very much to me; a mistake in selecting an unsuitable person might have fatal results. I met her very frequently, and when I could not spend the week-end at Ostend, she came to Brussels to spend the week-end there at my invitation. This went on for about five weeks—when she returned to Paris. Now we leave her to meet her again in Paris.

Let us now turn to Monsieur Legrange. M. Legrange hides the real identity of a "*fonctionnaire*" (permanent official) at the Quai d'Orsay. I have in a preceding chapter pointed out the peculiarities of French ministries and the great influence permanent officials have, who are easy targets for a foreign spy.

My frequent visits to several ministries in Paris gave me the necessary clue to the prosecution of my secret investigations. I had selected a fonctionnaire in the political department of the Foreign Office, one of the subordinates of Monsieur Louis, the Director of the Political Department there. M. Louis was some years later appointed French Ambassador in St. Petersburg, being the immediate predecessor of Monsieur Delcassé. M. Legrange was high up on the ladder, but was not one of the highest. But all confidential documents, instructions, reports, dispatches, arriving or leaving M. Louis' department, had to pass through his hands. I knew him, he knew me—but only in my capacity as the Mr. Rowntree's secretary, pursuing economic investigations in France. I saw that open, direct bribery was out of the question—I devised another plan. M. Legrange was a man who loved the good things of life and would have gone to great length had his means allowed him.

My plan now was to foster in him this "aptitude" and then lead him in my trap from which there was to be no escape. I often invited him to luncheon and dinners. Always in expensive hotels, to make him dissatisfied with his *milieu*. Once he was my guest at a luncheon with another fonctionnaire from the Ministry of the Interior at the Hotel Ritz in Paris; the lunch for us three having cost over three hundred

francs with wines and cigars. In the evenings I used to take him to a box in the Grand Opera, the Opera Comique, or some other theatre, to be followed by a supper party at some gay place. On every occasion I took him to a theatre I was accompanied by another demi-mondaine as my friend., I made him fairly envious. I also motored out with him to Enghien-les-Bains to the Casino there, that he should see me gamble. For him I was a gay Lothario, who seemed to live only for the pleasures of this life and seemed to have had plenty of money for the purpose. Then I would return to Brussels, leaving him to contemplate the inequalities of life. I succeeded thoroughly in making him dissatisfied with his lot. I had gained my first step. I was spreading my net. I want here to remark that " D " knew nothing of my methods ; he never asked me how I obtained my information.

Autumn again found me in Paris and one of my first visits was upon Céleste B——, my fascinating friend of the gaming-table at Ostend, who had a charming apartment not far from the Porte de Vincennes.

Céleste expressed surprise and genuine delight in seeing me again. Of course, we dined together. We drove out to Negresco in Enghien-les-Bains. I met her every day. At last I thought the time had come to act. I began to talk to her about spies and spying. Of course, she was interested. Who is not? I used to tell her of famous women spies, of their wonderful achievements, fascinating work, extraordinary adventures. Soon the question that I was angling for was uncovered.

" How can one like myself become a spy ? "

" Why do you ask me ? How should I know ? " I said with polite indifference, dropping the subject for the moment. Touching lightly upon a different phase of women's skill in espionage at all our little dinner parties and junkets about Paris, I finally one day pulled out with great deliberation a package of documents and gave her a glimpse of British embassy seals and other official letterheads. My preliminary tests had been satisfactory ; her eagerness and excitement now made the desirable opening.

" Céleste, I have it in my power to make you a secret agent with splendid rewards for good work."

" You want to ? " She was quite beside herself with joy.

I started unfolding to her a scheme. Desdemona could not have listened more rapturously to Othello than Céleste listened to me. I told her of moving behind the scenes of high diplomacy, of watching and analyzing the moves of sovereigns and ministers, of spying upon them, of unravelling hidden

and tangled webs of intrigues, of plotting schemes to undo the plots of others, of playing with men like with puppets, to gain the desired information that determined the fate of nations.

"Now, Céleste, the first duty of every secret agent is to obey the orders of your superior without question," I said, bringing our conversation to an abrupt close.

"My first instructions are these: To-morrow afternoon about 5 p.m. come to the Taverne Royale. If possible bring a gentleman friend with you, but when you leave the place, leave it alone. The gentleman must not go with you. You will see me in the Taverne Royale—on the 'terrace' or inside with a gentleman. Be careful not to show by any sign whatever that you know me or have ever seen me. The gentleman with me is a high official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His name is M. Legrange. For the next few weeks, months perhaps, you are to devote yourself to him."

"*Quelle aventure!*" she exclaimed, jumping up and dancing about the room.

"You must understand, Céleste, this is serious business. You must forget yourself in this task. And I ask myself, 'Can you do it without losing your heart?' He is a charming man."

Her enthusiasm for this ugly commission made me shudder a bit inwardly when I thought of Legrange. She could not fail, she protested vigorously, so I handed her a cheque for 2,000 francs, the advance in her first month of service, promising more in the successful issue of our plan. She took an affectionate farewell of me—and I went rather in conflict with myself.

Secret Service work is often cruel. I had perhaps little reason to doubt Céleste's loyalty—and yet one never knows absolute security in espionage. So, unknown to her, I had arranged with her pretty maid to act as my shadow. Indeed, that very night before I met her and gave her full instructions to watch her mistress closely, to read the letters and notes Céleste received and sent out. When I handed her 250 francs as her first month's pay—she thought she was a millionairess! A simple Breton girl

It was several months before I returned to Paris again, but I had suffered no anxiety about Céleste and the prodigious holes she was making in M. Legrange's bank account. Ninette, the maid, had written that "Monsieur Georges was playing a good deal and plunging always." There was apparently nothing to do but wait for his bankers to deny him the necessary accommodation.

One Saturday evening, soon after my return, I drove out to Enghien-les-Bains, to indulge in a little gambling at the

Casino there. I find sitting around the green table after a week's work a great relaxation—particularly if you win. Well, this night I have had remarkable luck. In Enghien only *baccarat à deux tables* or *chemins-de-fer* are played. The bank belongs to whoever buys it. The Casino provides the room tables, croupiers, etc., and collects of each 100 francs on the table, a progressive tax which is divided between the Town of Enghien (which owns the Casino) and the French Republic. In *chemins-de-fer* the bank goes round the table in strict order, save if a winning banker—after three rounds—wants to retire. In this case the bank does not go to his next neighbour, but is put up for auction and goes to the highest bidder. A retiring bank was for sale. Having had luck, I bought it for a rather big amount. The table was crowded, as the gambling was very high. The buying of a big bank riveted the attention of all on me. Two or three paces to my left amidst a surging crowd of onlookers and occasional *pointeurs* stood my friend Legrange. He now noticed me, and disentangling himself from the crowd, came and stood right behind me. We exchanged very cordial greetings. I dealt out—the whole bank was staked by two American ladies. All was in suspense. Without looking at my cards I asked the orthodox question :

"Cards ? "

"No," came back the reply.

According to the rules of the game I now turned up my cards and had the seven of spades and the ace of diamonds, I had won.

"*Faites vos jeux, Messieurs, le jeu est fait, rien va plus,*" shouted mechanically the croupier.

The same two American ladies doubled. I dealt out amid great excitement. They asked for another card, which according to the rules of the game I dealt open. It was the four of hearts. Diable ! I thought this time they would win. I turned up my two cards—they were the nine of diamonds and the ace of clubs ! In other words, I had as yet nothing. I took a third and last card —the eight of spades ! I had won again. Gamblers are superstitious ! They did not have the courage to play against me. There were six or seven small amounts staked, fortunately, for I lost. This gave me the desired opportunity to retire. I got up straightway and took Legrange by the arm and drew him into a secluded corner in the next room. There was a shocking change in his appearance. His beard was not so carefully clipped and trimmed as formerly, his step was heavy, his eyes unsteady, and his laugh hard and metallic. I noticed during conversation that although he was listening, his thoughts were wandering in far-away regions.

I turned up my two cards—they were the nine of diamonds and the ace of clubs! I took a third and last card—the eight of spades! I had won again.

Legrange was near a physical, financial, and moral collapse. I invited him to dine with me. He declined with profuse apologies and thanks, but " his amie " was also there! He went to find her—whilst I went out and smoked a cigarette. I was introduced to her, Céleste acting her part with perfect detail. We dined in the Negresco restaurant together, but Legrange was not the alert and graphic conversationalist of a few months ago; the burden upon his mind was not to be thrown off even for an evening's merrymaking. Towards the end of January I learned that Legrange was in the hands of usurers and I gave instructions to Céleste to be in Monte Carlo if possible the second week in February and bring Legrange with her.

From Toulon I went on to Monte Carlo, " D " arriving from Genoa the next day, having spent a holiday in Egypt. I wanted to see Céleste at Monte Carlo as I was ready for my coup. I expected great events for 1907. I knew of Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace's plots (on behalf of his royal master) in St. Petersburg the year before. I also knew of the negotiations of Mons. Isvolsky in Paris during his first visit to Paris after his appointment as Russia's Foreign Minister (May, 1906). I knew of the contemplated Mediterranean cruise of Edward VII and of the meeting that was arranged to take place between him and the King of Spain and the King of Italy, of the forthcoming visits of the Russian squadron to English naval ports, of the negotiations pending and far advanced towards conclusion of agreement between England and Russia, Russia and Japan, France and Japan.

Hence it was imperative that I should quickly be informed on all these matters. Evidently the net was tightening. Schemes of far-reaching importance were being discussed and decisions reached. Naturally I had all the facilities and opportunities to keep myself informed on all these points—but my methods had to be cautious, circuitous. It might take me weeks or months to get the whole story of all these events, yet it was highly desirable that I should know them as soon as reports reached the French Foreign Office on any of these coming events. I had to force matters with Legrange. I had asked Céleste to be at Monte Carlo with him. I reasoned as follows: Legrange was already heavily in debt—if he should lose and lose heavily at Monte Carlo, he would probably ask me for a temporary loan. This is of everyday occurrence there. People who in other towns or under any other circumstances would on no account approach a friend for a temporary loan, do so without any compunction at Monte Carlo. I once loaned money to a Russian general at Monte Carlo—a chance

acquaintance of mine—having only spoken to him two or three times in the Casino. He paid it next day.

Now, Mons Legrange, whom I knew well was a man who was rather proud and who liked to play the Grand Seigneur. We dined together, we had an occasional motor drive to Fontainebleau or in Normany—we discussed politics, diplomacy, etc., but I was disappointed that—although hard pressed for money by his creditors and although requiring more and more for Céleste's extravagant tastes—he never approached me for money, though by hints and carefully-guarded references I conveyed to him that I was open to suggestion I, therefore, tried the Monte Carlo scheme. Enghien—well, there is gambling there, but it is not a real gambling place An official like Legrange, if he goes there at all, spends an hour or two and goes home. Nothing much can happen. But Monte Carlo is unique. It exists for gambling and gambling alone. Its *raison d'etre* is gambling. The whole atmosphere, organisation of the place, entices you to gambling. I thought he might "bite on" there. Céleste had strict instructions from me not to be friendly with me; indeed, to play her rôle as if our meeting at Enghien had been our first and only one.

When I arrived at Monte Carlo I put up at a small hotel under an assumed name. I knew, of course, at what hotel Legrange and Céleste were staying, and soon after my arrival I called her up. She was to go to the Casino that evening between 9 and 9.30 p.m., stroll into the small salon on the right (through the *trente-et-quarante* room); I would be sitting at the roulette table. She was to walk round the table with Legrange until Legrange saw me. So it happened. As soon as Legrange noticed me, he was evidently very pleased. It is a psychological phenomenon that casual acquaintances meeting in Monte Carlo are at once friends, whilst the latter evidence boundless joy at meeting *there.*

"*Je suis enchanté de vous voir ici, quel bonheur! Quand êtes vous venus? Mais quelle chance!*" and so forth. I bowed to "Madame" and made my compliments. Where was I staying, eh? I was really staying at Cannes—I said—and only come over sometimes. I left the table and strolled out with Legrange to the terrace. It was a beautiful evening Before us lay the moonlit Mediterranean, calm, balmy; we were surrounded by the beautiful Casino gardens. Legrange was melancholic, depressed. From past experiences I knew that this was a favourable opportunity to draw him into a discussion on international politics. With the stage set so auspiciously what more natural than that we should discuss

Edward's forthcoming Mediterranean cruise. He was in a bitter frame of mind and went on complainingly:

"I cannot understand our foreign policy. In order to gain back Alsace-Lorraine we support Russia's adventures in the Far East and say 'yes' and 'amen' to whatever she does in Europe. For the same reason, we support, nay, we concoct with you English an anti-German policy. To my mind we should have gone a long step forward towards solving the Alsace question if after Fashoda we had accepted the advances of Germany and instead of offending her by the Morocco deal, made an honest understanding with her."

"I agree with you, such a policy on your part would have compelled France to join and become the friends of both you and Germany."

"But, *mon cher* Monsieur Lincoln, it was impossible, yes, quite impossible. We Frenchmen are brought up with hatred towards everything German. We are taught to see in every move of Germany nothing but brutal aggression. It is instilled into us by our text-books in school, by our parents, by our newspapers, by our statesmen and politicians. If the present policy of England and France will issue in war—and I cannot see how it can be prevented unless one side gives up the policy hitherto pursued—it will be useless to lay the blame on this thing or that event. It is destiny. We cannot escape it. We do not believe Germany; we distrust her, we hate her. No agreement or facts can counteract the carefully nursed influences of school, home, and public life."

This exposé greatly impressed me. It hit the nail on its head. It was the truth! I tried to pump him about Edward's contemplated steps in France, Spain, and Italy during his forthcoming visits to these countries, but he knew nothing more than merely the outlines of the steps and the direction of policy. Evidently pourparlers were still going on.

We re-entered the Casino as Céleste was playing there. The balmy air of the Riviera, the quiet conversation, revived both of us. We sat down at the *trente-et-quarante* table; Céleste remained at one of the roulette tables. Legrange won and won heavily. Next day—we met in the Casino by appointment—Legrange lost, and so after a while he discontinued. He was evidently anxious to keep his gains. In the evening he lost bit by bit, and went deeper and deeper into the game. He became flurried and excited—he lost more. And then discontinued. And the next day he lost his all. He asked me for 1,000 francs till next day, having wired for money to Paris. Indeed, he repaid me next day. Within two days he lost all his freshly received money and borrowed from me—until

we met in Paris, where, I told him, I expected to be within six or seven days.

I remained in Monte Carlo one more day with "D." He impressed upon me the absolute necessity of obtaining precise information on Edward's contemplated steps, so that he might voice an opposition to them in the columns of the *Nation*, in Parliament, and in the Cabinet. Let Sir Edward Grey now recollect the heated arguments he had with some of the Cabinet Ministers in early summer (or late spring), who even went to the Prime Minister and argued against Edward's policy. But they were fooled, left in the dark.

"Who were the lady and the gentleman I saw you almost constantly with?" asked "D."

"The lady my agent, the gentleman my victim!" was my laconic reply.

"I believe that if half you do to get your information were known, you would be considered a Jekyll and Hyde."

"No, sir!" I replied. "I would be considered the very Devil himself."

"D," of course, was by no means a child in the game of subterranean diplomacy, but—he will pardon me for saying this—he had the hypocritical attributes of his race—he liked to pretend to be shocked. We both returned to Paris, I remaining there while he continued to London. I met Legrange in Paris and he promptly repaid me, but I knew from Céleste that he was terribly worried by his creditors. The time had arrived for action. I had to return to Brussels on Mr. Rowntree's business. I returned to Paris with a sub-agent of mine, Heinrich.

Heinrich was an interesting fellow. He had a dignified, almost aristocratic appearance, thanks to his height, broad shoulders, faultless dressing, but above all to his dark, full beard. It gave him the appearance of a distinguished French diplomat, or a grand seigneur. His speech was deliberate, slow, but he could be bitingly sarcastic, peremptorily cruel. He was a great actor. I got him to buy up some of Legrange's overdue notes. I sent him to Legrange. I told him on no account to enter into bargaining, but to make a savage assault on him—a frontal attack. The same day I sent Céleste away from Paris. She went to Rome—I having found a spy's position for her with a foreign government, where, as I learned later, she did some excellent work.

My man from Brussels went with several bills to Legrange —demanded payment. Legrange asked for delay. "Heinrich" (princes, waiters and Secret Service men use only Christian names) brutally replied :

" No delay whatever. On the other hand, I shall hand you these bills and give you a substantial sum if you will reply to some of my questions and do a few other little things for me."

" What are they ? " he asked. Heinrich bluntly told him. First, what proposals did Edward VII make to Alfonso XIII at Carthagena in April of this year ; second, what proposals to Italy's king in the same month at Gaeta ; third, reports and plans of joint Anglo-French military and naval commissions. That was all.

Legrange was indignant, excited, threatening. Heinrich remained calm. Legrange threatened Heinrich with instant arrest.

Indeed, he reached for his telephone. Heinrich calmly stopped him.

" I advise you, before you ring up the police, to ring up your mistress. You may have a surprise."

The calmness, the deliberation with which Heinrich spoke made Legrange anxious. He looked bewildered at my agent. He feverishly rang up Céleste. No reply ; he rang and rang. He then rang up the concièrge.

" Oh, yes ! Madame left this morning with her maid and all her trunks. She said she will be back in three weeks."

Legrange collapsed ! He mumbled something hoarsely. Heinrich drove it home mercilessly.

" Now have me arrested."

Legrange sat there, his head buried in his hands—a wreck, his heart torn with rage, disappointment and betrayal. He begged to be left alone, but Heinrich pursued him remorselessly.

" No, you will give me the information desired or I will have you arrested for what you have already disclosed to your mistress."

As a matter of fact, Legrange did not disclose anything of importance to Céleste, but who remembers what one has said or done during a year ! Besides, his state of mind was such that he really believed it himself. He saw himself the victim of a plot. He was frightened, excited, torn by anguish, shame, and distress ; he was like a straw in the hands of Heinrich.

" Monsieur Legrange, I now leave you ; unless the desired information is in my hands the day after to-morrow at this address in Brussels you will be denounced. Don't try to escape. I shall have you shadowed. If you try to leave France, my agents—who will follow you like a Nemesis—will have you arrested. Bon soir ! "

I need not add that the desired information reached me in Brussels without delay.

A TRAGEDY IN THE EAST

By

SIR GEORGE ASTON, K.C.B.

WE NOW turn our minds to the East, to a tragedy of the Secret Service which again reminds one strongly of the old saw that truth is sometimes stranger than fiction. I shall give the actual facts, only suppressing—for reasons which will be obvious—the names and the exact localities. I hesitated for a time about telling this particular story, but many years have now passed since the occurrence, and with them the bitter war-spirit. A description of the activities of Secret Service officers engaged in field-intelligence work would be incomplete if such a tale were omitted.

Those who took the leading parts in the tragedy were a British Intelligence Officer, whom we will call "Mannering," and his opponent in the German Secret Service, one "Fritz"—whom we will ennoble to "von Fritz" in view of his intrepidity and the sad climax that was caused by his activities. Mannering was serving with certain British Empire troops in the East in the year 1917. It came to his knowledge earlier in the year that the area occupied by that British Army was infested by enemy secret agents, and he pondered over the best method of inciting the troops to take steps to cope with this serious menace to the secrecy of future operations. He reported the danger to the Commander-in-Chief on whose staff he was serving. He also mentioned current rumours to the effect that one "Fritz," a German, had been constantly behind the British lines in disguise, seeking for information. No proofs of the presence of "Fritz" had been obtained, and no credence was attached by Mannering to the rumours. Nevertheless, it was decided to make use of the tales for the special purpose of awakening interest among the troops in the urgent need to keep a sharp look-out for any Secret Service agents who might attempt to enter—and were believed to have entered—the British war area in disguise.

An order was accordingly issued to all commanders reporting the probable visits of the mysterious Fritz, and urging his detection and arrest. That order had an immediate effect, and great alertness was shown, from the

highest to the lowest rank in the Army. Numerous arrests were made, and the bag was varied. It included Mannering himself. He was arrested as a suspicious character, and he was detained until he was vouched for by an unimpeachable authority. The supposed activities of the (non-existent?) Fritz were further described in detail and so was his appearance, for which " Intelligence " were obliged to draw upon their imagination. All ranks were asked to co-operate in catching the villain, and all ranks did so, with the result described.

About ten days later it fell to the lot of Mannering in the course of his duties to visit a prisoner-of-war camp. His identity appears to have been known in that camp, as the Commandant told him that a certain Greek prisoner, a deserter from the Turkish Army, had expressed a wish to see him. The interview was allowed. The Greek explained the circumstances in which he had effected his desertion from the enemy, and then he surprised Mannering by a statement that he had been in the habit for some time of working for a veritable " Fritz," hitherto believed to be a mere bogey! The Greek added that, if Mannering would arrange for his speedy release, he would do his very best to help in laying Fritz by the heels.

After some thought, Mannering agreed, but as a precaution he took the Greek with him to the nearest Greek Consul, and they satisfied themselves that the man was a Greek and therefore a neutral subject. The explanation given by the Greek for his desertion from the Turks was that he had had a quarrel with " Fritz," but nevertheless it would be quite easy for him to go back to the Turkish lines, taking any information with which it was thought desirable to supply him. It must be enough to constitute a guarantee of good faith in the eyes of Fritz and his Secret Service Department. The Greek promised that, if those conditions were fulfilled, he would arrange a meeting-place to which Fritz would be induced to come over from the Turkish lines, and it would then be quite simple to seize his person. The conditions were accepted, and in due course the Greek was supplied with enough (harmless) information to effect his purpose. Then he slipped away, out of ken for the time being.

About five days later the Greek reported that Fritz would be coming within the British lines, in accordance with his usual practice, on a certain day when some troop-movements were to take place. The spot arranged by the Greek as a rendezvous for Mannering was ideal for such a purpose. It was remote and deserted, situated in a dry water-course and

only visible at very close range, a romantic setting for such an adventure. During the afternoon of the appointed day Mannering rode out, full of hope, and when he drew near the secret rendezvous, he was rejoiced by the sight of the Greek, standing by his horse, so the man had kept his word. After the usual greetings, the Greek told Mannering that Fritz had come over, and that he and " an orderly " were within the British lines. They would soon return.

There Mannering remained for about two hours in conversation with the Greek, who produced plenty of documentary evidence to prove that he was still working with Fritz. The Greek asked whether Mannering was armed? Having ascertained that he was, the Greek then advised him to shoot at Fritz at sight, as soon as he arrived. Ample warning would be given of his approach, and thus they waited until, at about 6 p.m., a horseman was seen approaching. " That is the orderly," whispered the Greek. " He is disguised in British uniform. Fritz is certain to be close behind."

In due course the orderly rode up to the Greek and handed over some papers, telling him (in German) that Fritz, having been chased by some British troops, was making his own way back to the Turkish lines by another route. The Greek appeared to be surprised and disappointed at the orderly's report. He then told Mannering that Fritz would be crossing the lines again in a few days, and promised that another meeting would be arranged. Better luck next time. Mannering saw no alternative but to acquiesce if there was to be any hope of catching the elusive Fritz, but naturally he did not intend to allow the orderly to go back to the enemy. A secret known by three is no secret, so he told the Greek that, in the circumstances, it was necessary to arrest the orderly, who was then standing a few paces away, tending his horse. The Greek saw the point at once and agreed, suggesting to Mannering to look over the side of the gully in order to make sure that the road was clear. " Then we will hold up the orderly," he added.

Mannering, with his hand on an automatic pistol in his pocket in case of treachery, led his horse a few yards away and swung quickly into the saddle. As he did so, two reports rang out and bullets whizzed past him. Whipping round, he faced the orderly and the Greek, who were both firing at him. The surprise was complete. Mannering's horse bounded about, while he covered his assailants as best he could and opened fire upon them with his pistol. The orderly was hit. The Greek galloped away and was lost to sight, followed by the orderly's

horse with an empty saddle. Thus Mannering was left with the orderly, mortally wounded, expiring on the ground.

He dismounted, and he then discovered to his horror that the dying "orderly," accomplice of the treacherous Greek in the combined attempt to assassinate him, was a woman, apparently German, dressed as a man in British uniform. She soon passed away, a pitiful victim of heroic endeavour in her country's cause, killed in attempting—wearing her enemy's uniform—to help the Greek to assassinate the Chief of her enemy's Secret Service. We can draw the veil over the final obsequies. Mannering did his best. There is no twilight in those regions, and the sun had gone down when he rode homeward in the solitude pondering over the events of the day. With shame at having killed a woman inadvertently, there came the thought of how he had been tricked by the Greek, and then again how could he have acted otherwise? The woman was a German, dressed as a man in her enemy's uniform, and she had done her best to take his life. "If only I had bagged the Greek instead of the woman!" was his final thought, and there we leave him on his homeward way.

There is a sequel to the story. "Fritz," whom he had tried to capture, was neither a bogey nor a myth, but a formidable reality—probably the most efficient and resourceful German Secret Service agent in the whole of the Great War. The Greek was Fritz himself. The orderly was his wife.

The truth was not known to Mannering until some months after the Armistice, when he knew it on the first-hand authority of Fritz himself, in writing. A year or two later the two were destined to meet face to face in a café in the territory occupied by British troops. They recognised each other, but they did not speak. . . .

A SPY SEES THE OUTBREAK OF THE REVOLUTION

By
NICHOLAS SNOWDEN

OUR regiment held a position near the village of Bobulince, two miles south of Kujdanow, the very focus of the Russian attack. That part of the front had already been greatly weakened by the Russian barrage, when we were first ordered into reserve. After reaching the Regimental Command our battalion under Lieutenant Fay got its further orders from Colonel Hajjos, and we made our way to the top of the hill, from which the view extended in every direction. The position seemed so hazardous that as if by common impulse our soldiers crossed themselves and made hasty prayers. There was no way to hide ourselves from the captive balloon from which the observers from the Russian artillery emplacements directed the fire. Bodies of Austrian, German and Russian soldiers were scattered everywhere along the river bank and on the hillside, with cast-off equipment littering the ground. Soon we were sighted by the Russians and a salvo of shrapnel shell followed by grenades exploded above and around us.

When night came we marched out of the valley, across the stream, and continued our hill-climbing past a succession of valley farms. We passed many dead and wounded soldiers, even stepping on them in the darkness.

At last we stopped, formed a new line, and were ordered to dig new trenches to protect us while still in reserve. The front line was on the western bank of the Styrpa river and it was now to be extended with connecting trenches on the left and the right flanks, so that neighbouring battalions might be in touch. The front line on that sector turned a right angle, which from a military point of view is regarded as one of the most vulnerable positions to hold. We were receiving a heavy fire from the front and were likewise flanked on our left.

Throughout the night fires broke out at various places along the front line and the red reflections on the sky added to the horror even while they relieved the darkness. At dawn, a sergeant-major brought up hot beef stew and bread, but a

shrapnel shell exploded near him and he fled without delivering the rations. Thereupon we took care of the breakfast problem ourselves.

A beautiful, clear sunny morning greeted us and we saw golden fields of wheat in every direction where the little farms appeared in the valley and on the hillside. The wheat fields gave us a means of concealment and camouflage, a welcome protection against the Russian artillery observers. It was hard to make the beauty of the day and the landscape seem consistent with the confusion and destruction of the great battle.

This day, June 13, 1916, was the day of disaster for our forces. At seven o'clock the Russians began their attack against the first line, which had already been greatly weakened during the night. To reinforce it the battalion commandant, Lieutenant Fay, ordered our first and second companies to the front line at the utmost speed. My orderly volunteered to deliver that order to the first company, which was on our right flank. With an invocation to God, asking for help, the soldiers of these companies crossed themselves, and in the next moment were moving ahead, taking what infrequent cover they could as they ran down the hillside. The wheat fields ceased to give protection all too soon, and then came a bare, unplanted field which had to be crossed. Just as we reached that field we saw that the Russians had already penetrated our first line, doubling our troops back as they passed and taking many prisoners. We were next to receive the Russian fire, volley after volley, and it was all but hand-to-hand fighting as we reoccupied those of the shallow trenches which we could reach as we retreated. The machine-guns were at such close range and were firing so rapidly that many of them became overheated. The Russian fire was so close to the ground that most of our dead and wounded, who were partly concealed in the trenches, were wounded in the head. My own orderly called for help, blinded by a shot through the head, but miraculously he was not instantly killed as was the result of most such wounds.

The Russians' advance was rapid, and as they neared our positions Lieutenant Schürger ordered us to vacate our useless trenches and retreat as hastily as possible. Some obeyed quickly but many fell dead or were wounded in flight. I was one of those who remained in the trench. I threw away my automatic and watched the approaching Russians, sheltering myself as best I could, for they were still firing fiercely. Then the firing ceased, as they saw that resistance had ceased. I cold hear the rustling of the wheat once more, and the heavy breathing of the soldiers who were advancing through it. I

could even smell the halina leather of their boots, and when I stood erect with my hands held high in the air, I was face to face with the first line of the Russians, who were peeping into our trenches from above me.

On my sudden appearance the young Russian soldier became confused, and rushed towards me with fixed bayonet. An older one, with a long black beard, grabbed his rifle, pushed it aside, and motioning me to a way through their line, said, " Go ! " I jumped out of the trench and hastily made my way through six files of Russian soldiers who were following closely one after another.

Behind the line I was halted and questioned by an officer who was following his men at a few paces' distance. He asked me as to the number of our reserves. I told him that our own battalion was the only reserve to my knowledge, and that not many of them were left, the greater part being killed or wounded. We spoke in Polish. While our conversation lasted, he held a spade in front of his head for partial protection against stray bullets. It was still a hot corner and I was glad to obey when he ordered me to go straight ahead, down the hillside.

When I approached the Russian reserve line I held my hands high above my head once more. A soldier in the group I was approaching angrily shouted something at me two or three times, but in the noise of battle, and my own excitement, I did not understand what he was saying. Suddenly he rushed towards me, pulled my bayonet out of its holster, and threw the weapon on the ground with such force that it almost buried itself. I had made the mistake of not throwing away all of my arms before surrendering.

The soldier then took me to a road where I saw many other prisoners-of-war. There we were ordered to form a line while the Russians counted their prisoners. Austrian artillery was still firing shrapnel into this position. It was exploding close to us, and the Russians were quite as glad as were their prisoners to run in all directions. However, they soon gathered us together again and, with fixed bayonets, escorted us through the village which was packed with their troops. Again we came to a point which was under heavy artillery fire, and for the second time we attempted to seek cover, but our guard kept us together, forcing us to march on. Actually, the Austrian artillery was directing its fire very ineffectively. They were keeping the old positions of the Russians under fire, whereas the Russians, in the meantime, had advanced at least a mile and a half.

When we finally crossed the newly built pontoon bridge

across the Strypa river, we were out of danger for the first time. It was a relief to get a drink of water there, and feel the assurance of safety as we moved up the other slope of the valley of the Strypa. Soon we came to the first-aid station of the Russian army, a primitive cabin, over which a Red Cross flag was flying, at the edge of a forest. As we passed, a peasant woman stood in the doorway with her hands on her hips, looking at us and watching the scene in the valley as calmly as if it had been a motion picture play instead of a death struggle between two hostile armies.

Another march of a few miles brought us to the Brigade Command where we were counted again, or at least a count was attempted. We had not been in Russian hands more than three hours but already every one of us knew how to say "forty" (*sorok*) in Russian. As soon as the Russian tally reached that number, they began to count again, and sometimes five of them were counting us at the same time. The results were various. They seemed quite unable to make their totals agree. They cursed their luck and tried placing five of us in a row instead of four, but that did not seem to help them since their arithmetic could not be depended upon.

While we were still halted at Brigade Headquarters the Russian Brigade Staff and the troops attached to this staff at Headquarters began to break camp so as to follow the victorious army and occupy an advanced position nearer their new front. At the same time, new groups of prisoners-of-war were continually arriving under guard. All such groups included one or more of our officers.

That afternoon we endured a heavy storm while we were marching, a veritable cloudburst, with a bombardment of hailstones the size of hazel nuts. The heavens seemed to be continuing the gunfire which the Russians had started. A little later we passed a village bakery, and the aroma of fresh bread made us realise our exhaustion and our hunger. For the past forty-eight hours we had eaten practically no food. Hunger had not bothered us until now, buoyed up by excitement, danger and new incidents, as we had been. The bakery stirred our appetites. Fortunately there were men among us who were able to work upon the goodwill of our escort, and from each squad one prisoner was permitted to make purchases for his fellows. The baker accepted Austrian money for his merchandise and every one of us was able to get at least one loaf of bread. To our great surprise it was white bread.

On the sixth day of our journey we crossed the Russian border at Husiatyn, a town which was in absolute ruins.

After marching three days farther, we entrained at Kamanets Podolski for Kiev, and three days of railway travel then brought us to our destination at Darnitza, the famous concentration and distributing station for prisoners-of-war.

From the barracks the Cossacks made distribution of the prisoners-of-war, especially assigning them to farmers. On the third day in prison I was assigned to a Tatar farmer, whose son was a prisoner-of-war in Germany. He drove me out to his farm in a wagon drawn by one horse. The Tatar village which was our destination was some fifteen miles from Rostov, a fact which pleased me. The distance was not so great that I would find it difficult to go to the city when I was ready to do so, nor so near that I would be subject to espionage. As is the Russian custom, this farmer and his neighbours lived in a tiny village, going out to their farms and fields each day and returning at night. When we arrived at the farmer's house, his wife cried bitterly when she saw me, reminded as she was of her own son, a prisoner in Germany, and perhaps himself at forced labour on a German farm.

After a scanty supply of steamed cheese, which was as tough and elastic as chewing-gum and just as susceptible to stretching in separate strings, with a little bread and tea, I was sent to feed and water the horses. It was nearly eleven o'clock when I was permitted to go to sleep in the stable. I was awakened by the farmer at dawn who told me that it was time to start to the farm. His fields were not far from the village and soon we reached the place, just as the sun was showing on the horizon. We worked in the potato field all morning without a bite of breakfast.

Just before noon, the Tatar farmer went home and his daughter, a girl of about eighteen years, and his son, a thirteen-year-old boy, brought some lunch to me. It was the same kind of cheese and bread that I had had for supper the night before. The young people worked with me for a while and then they both went away, leaving me alone. My arms were aching from the unfamiliar work and my hands were covered with blisters. As soon as they were out of sight I lay down for a rest and some sleep. It was sunset when the girl and boy returned, and their arrival was the first interruption of my sleep. They said nothing, but when the old Tattar came out to the farm to drive us home he said enough for three.

I had discovered that twenty-four hours was a long enough time for me to be a farmer, and during the night that followed I resolved to take my departure. This resolution had been encouraged by the fact that supper consisted of the same cheese, bread and water. When I finished my work

in the stable I made my belongings ready for the journey, before I turned in. I soon fell asleep, but the horse, my companion in the lodgings, was restless and the noise he made awakened me as I had anticipated it would do. It was not long, therefore, before I was marching toward Rostov on the same road over which the Tatar farmer had driven me.

Suddenly, as I neared Rostov, a Cossack patrol appeared on the road. I had no time to hide myself, and they stopped to question me. I had no adequate explanation with which to satisfy them, and I was promptly sent under guard to the barracks, which were still filled with prisoners-of-war. A Cossack non-commissioned officer called me into the guard-room. He asked me no more questions, nor gave me further chance to concoct explanations. With his *nagaikaa* (thonged horsewhip) in hand, he beat me up mercilessly, finishing with the exclamation : " So you don't want to work ! You escaped from your job ! Well, after this, perhaps you'd rather work ! "

When the Cossack released me from the guard-room, I returned to the other war prisoners in the barracks and got what sympathy and care I could. My fellow prisoners gathered round me and bathed my back, but they had nothing but cold water and rags for a remedy. Within half an hour my back was badly swollen and covered with bloody black-and-blue stripes. The next day I was taken to other barracks, the Command Headquarters of the prisoners-of-war, called " Vistovka," where I was kept for three days more.

On my fourth day at Vistovka my chance came to get out of there, when ten labourers were sought for work in a chemical factory located on Pushinskaia Street. Men were wanted who could speak the German language and I was among the ten assigned to this job. A Russian and a German engineer came from the chemical factory and escorted us to the place of our new employment.

In this new place I was assigned to carrying packages from the packing department to the shipping department. I worked for three days very faithfully, so as to arouse not the slightest suspicion toward myself. For the first two nights I went with a group of fellow prisoners for a walk about town, returning with them to the factory. I never confided to any one that I spoke the Russian language fluently, pretending to be quite " green." On the third night, after working hours, I managed to depart by myself, and that was the end of my job in that factory.

There were thousands of prisoners-of-war in the city of

Rostov who went about freely and who wore civilian clothes, so that when I entered a store on Sadovaia Street to buy myself a suit, there was nothing suspicious about that. I bought the outfit I needed and changed my uniform for decent civilian clothes in the seclusion of a field outside the city, throwing away the rags that I discarded. That night I spent sleepless, passing the evening hours in a motion picture theatre, then finding refuge in cafés, and at last walking the street at early dawn. With the new day, under the name of Nikolai Stepanovich Zvirlinsky, I found lodging in the home of a Russian bank clerk named Nikolai Alexandrovich Ivanov. No longer under surveillance, I promptly got into action and wrote a Red Cross postcard to Captain Karakas at Moscow, addressing him at the neutral consulate where I knew him to be employed. In writing my innocent postcard, I used the code given me by Major von Kirchens, introducing the password, "Conrad," and the parole word, "Baden Baden," between the lines according to my instructions.

A few days later, in response to my card, a courier sought me out. This messenger at first offered me a passport which, to my surprise, carried my photograph. I refused to accept this passport for the reason that I did not speak the language of the country of which I was supposed to be the subject, as there indicated. Thereupon a Russian civil and military document was secured for me under the name of Zvirlinsky. By these Russian papers I was certified as permanently disabled for military service. I then received from the courier a substantial sum of money, and detailed plans directing me how I was to organise in the safest and quickest way possible the squad of confidential men who were to be under my direction.

Without delay I began as cautiously as I could the Secret Service work which was the object of my assignment to Rostov. I had under my constant vigilance the garrisons, railroad stations, ammunition dumps and factories in the city and in that vicinity. My correspondence was addressed to me at the Vistovka post office, and though it went through the censor's hands, there was never a suspicion of its hidden contents, disguised in plain language on innocent subjects. All war prisoners who were assigned to work in Rostov or in that vicinity received their correspondence at Vistovka, where there was an indexed letter-box and every prisoner could look for his mail.

In the ammunition factories I was able to make use of methods which were employed by the Japanese during the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, secretly corrupting workmen

and inducing them to make defective shells which would not explode, and to pack as many as possible of that kind among the good ones which were about to be shipped to the army. It was a common thing at the front for such defective shells to come from the Russian lines and our soldiers used to remark: "Our friends have mailed us another dead letter," when that happened.

My lodgings with the young bank clerk, Nikolai Alexandrovich Ivanov, proved to be well chosen. He was an agreeable fellow and we became excellent chums. There were four of us, Nikolai and I, Sub-Lieutenant Vasil Vladimirovich Chervenko and Michael Michaelovich Rodzianko, a railway official, who found our youthful fun nightly on the Boulevard Sadovaia. It was easy to get acquainted, and had we wished we could have made friends with a different group of high-school girls every fifteen minutes. In the larger cities of Russia, street acquaintances were the customary thing. One simply walked to a girl's side and asked her consent to introduce oneself. If she consented, the acquaintance was made. If she objected, no harm was done and the stranger would courteously depart.

Morality in Russia was at a low ebb, as it was in the rest of the countries that were engaged in the World War. High-school pupils and other girls no older walked the boulevards late at night, completely without parental authority or care. Hotels contributed to the resulting immorality. They even preferred to rent their rooms to a wayward couple for half an hour, rather than for the whole night, because the short-time rental was the more profitable for them.

The lodgings which I shared with my friend Nikolai were in the house of an officer of the Don Cossacks, Aliosha Michaelovich Demchenko, who was at the front. I met him only twice during my stay in Rostov, when he came home for short leaves of absence. Although he was only twenty-two years of age, he had a substantial household well under way. His mother lived with him, and he and his wife had five children. The old mother, whom we called Granny (*Babushka*), took care of our rooms.

As the Easter festival drew near we made preparations for that occasion. My chum's only sister, Vera Alexandrovna Ivanova, a very attractive girl of twenty-two years, lived near-by, in Kazanskaia Street, at the home of Captain Chaechenko, a naval officer. We used to go there often, not altogether on account of my chum's sister, but also because of the captain's daughter, Lubochka, a nineteen-year-old beauty, who captivated every one. In face and figure she was one of the

most charming creatures I have ever known, five feet three inches in height, with fair complexion, large blue eyes, dark eyebrows and curly hair. She was a Spanish rather than a Russian type. After finishing school, she had begun the study of medicine but, after a year, found that she had no ambition for that profession and turned with more interest toward the stage. She was a natural dancer and a natural actress.

Things were gay among the young people of Rostov in spite of the forebodings and the atmosphere of war. We even undertook to gratify our theatrical aspirations. Under the spell of Lubochka's charms I wrote a melodrama, called *La Contessa*. Of course, she was to have the star role, and the manuscript was accepted by a local theatrical man for production in the Olympia Theatre. The young star studied in a local theatrical school to prepare herself for the part. We were at the height of this plan as Easter approached.

The celebration of Easter and the preparation for our theatrical performance were the last peaceful events in our life at Rostov. Revolution was so near that we could almost hear the rumblings. On the 20th of March, 1917, as my chum Mikolai returned from his daily work, he brought disturbing news. Something serious must be happening in Petrograd and Moscow. Telephone and telegraph communication with those cities had been suspended. Nothing was coming through to reveal what was actually occurring in the north. The news was particularly disturbing to me, for the opening production of my play at the Olympia Theatre was set for the 23rd of March. For the next two days there was no reopening of communication with the north, although in Rostov everything was quiet, with no signs of anything unusual. The silence was ominous.

The theatrical opening seemed to promise a great success. The audience was large and enthusiastic with its applause after each succeeding act. In retrospect now I see the audience, the stage and the actors, and live again the drama which I had written, soon to be obscured by the great drama of actuality which was so near. I still see the beauty of the stage setting, trace the plot of the play in which the beautiful Lubochka Chaenchenkova was making her début. In my drama she was the young Countess Nicola Wittemori, beginning her honeymoon at the Italian estate of her husband, the Count. The castle where the young couple began their happiness was surrounded by beautiful gardens, with a river of clear, cold water coming down the mountain-side. A pool with fountains in front of the castle, gardens of white and red roses,

decorative statuary, and all the beauties of a formal Italian garden at its best made the stage setting an elaborate one.

As the play had it, the young Count Wittemori, seeking relief on a hot summer day, donned his swimming-suit and made his way by a path up the mountain-side to where the stream that supplied the fountains was deep and wide. From the terrace, where the Countess stood among the roses, she could see her husband wave his hand as he prepared to dive into the icy water. At that moment visitors were announced and she sent servants to bring her husband back to the castle. There was tragedy to report. He had been drowned.

Then came the development of the play as a dream of the young widow-bride, with the introduction of choruses of beautiful girls in butterfly costumes among the roses, and youths who were their lovers, nymphs and dryads, dance and song, a picturesque scene of brilliant light and beauty. At last the nymphs vanished among the roses, the dancers disappeared, and the young countess awoke from her dream, alone. There was nothing remaining but a pair of singing birds above her head. She leaned against the tree in grief, looking at the crystal stream flowing past, the stream which had carried away her hope of love and happiness. The audience broke into a storm of applause, for the beauty of the scene could not be doubted.

The curtain was lowered, but the applause continued. Just as the signal was given to raise the curtain again for the actors to acknowledge the compliment, there was a clamour at the rear of the theatre, and through the lobby doors there burst a shouting crowd, whose cries drowned out the applause of the audience.

" Hurrah for the Revolution ! The Revolution has come ! Orchestra out ! "

It was no time for the members of the orchestra to disclose which of them were sympathetic and which unsympathetic to the Revolution, if indeed there was such divergence. Neither did the audience undertake to display its partisanship. The situation was too tense. With their musical instruments the orchestra followed the cheering crowd through the lobby and upstairs to the balcony that faced the street. Below, a throng was waiting which crowded the pavements as well as the street from kerb to kerb.

In response to questions, I was told by one of the Revolutionists that what was then in progress at Rostov followed by some hours the triumphant success of the Revolution in Petrograd and Moscow. As soon as the news had been received in Rostov the students of the universities and the

high schools held meetings in order to vote whether to join or oppose the Revolution. The military garrison likewise held meetings to consider and vote, the officers and soldiers meeting separately.

The students were the first to make the affirmative decision, and from the place of their meeting the boys and girls thronged into the streets, hand in hand, shouting, " Comrades, join us! Hurrah for the Revolution!" It was this group of students and their leaders who broke into the Olympia Theatre and forced the orchestra to furnish music for the street crowd. From the theatre a marching procession went up the street, and our play was at an end, the stage deserted. Those who were sufficiently stirred to unite with the Revolution marched with the procession, and those who were frightened or who thought some other solution might yet develop took to their homes.

As the crowd grew larger, moment by moment, it moved uptown by way of Sadovaia, the principal street of the city, and the cry suddenly rose, "Let's open the gaols! Let's release the prisoners!" The multitude cheered that suggestion, and the throng changed its direction of march through a side street toward the gaols.

During the night a few small clashes occurred between Revolutionists and Counter-Revolutionists, resulting in eight deaths altogether. The dead were buried on the following day with military pomp, and the caskets were followed to the cemetery by great hosts of the Revolutionists.

JAPANESE ESPIONAGE

By

WINIFRIED LÜDECKE

In his historical notes to the German Field Service Manual for the year 1908, the famous military writer, Colonel Immanuel, pointed out the splendid and efficient service rendered by the Japanese espionage organisation, which, as it is notorious, contributed in most vital ways to the outcome of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5. The war ended in victory for Japan and established the claim of that country to a place in the ranks of the Great Powers. According to *bushido*, the Japanese code of morals and conduct, espionage practised in the service of one's country is regarded as honourable and fair ; after all, it demands courage and daring, two of the virtues most highly prized by the Samurai and generously recognised by them even in their enemies. An incident that occurred towards the end of September, 1904, will illustrate this. A Russian soldier, disguised as a Chinese, was captured, convicted of having acted as a spy against Japan, and executed ; but the Japanese were so deeply impressed by his bravery and his ideal of devotion to his own country that, after the sentence had been carried out, they sent a communication to the Russian headquarters, in which they lavished unstinted praise upon his patriotism and fearlessness.

Just as in the British army we find that master-spy, Sir Robert Baden-Powell, and many another distinguished professional soldier, most successful in the work of espionage, so, too, in the Land of the Rising Sun it is the military officer who, both in peace and in war, has undoubtedly achieved the greatest success as a spy.

The Japanese spies had no scruples in committing acts of sabotage, as is shown by a case reported from the Far East. In the early part of 1904 Russian patrols captured near the East-China Railway two Japanese officers, who had found their way into Manchuria for the purpose of destroying the Russian railway works and telegraph lines. The better to conceal their nationality and their connection with the Japanese army, they were wearing Mongolian dress. They were found in possession of various implements and tools to be used in the performance of their nefarious work. By the

court-martial which tried them in Harbin they were condemned to lose their military status and to die by hanging, a sentence which was modified to death by shooting, the revision being ordered by the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army, General Kuropatkin, in consideration of their rank.

Long before the beginning of the war, Port Arthur especially was swarming with Japanese spies, who disguised themselves as Chinese or Manchus, and were indistinguishable in the population of workmen and *hunhulze.** Every tenth coolie was really a Japanese. As servants to the 1st Tomsk Regiment and the 25th and 26th Siberian Rifles, which formed part of the garrison in Port Arthur, as porters on the Liao Tiah Shan Railway, and above all as navvies employed in the construction of the fortifications, they were able to render their country the most valuable services. The situation of the electric power-station, the concealed positions of the searchlights among the hills, and the distribution of the minefields laid down to protect the harbour, were all made known to a detail to the Japanese army leaders by the masterly work of their espionage system. It was accordingly no wonder if the searchlights that were intended to dazzle Admiral Togo's attacking squadron with floods of blinding light were shot to pieces at once by the Japanese guns, or if, in the course of five attacks made by the Admiral on Port Arthur only one of his ships was destroyed by a mine, and that mine one that had broken adrift.

In contrast to the Russians, the Japanese found it a very simple business, during the war in Manchuria, to procure people among the ordinary inhabitants of the country who were willing to act as spies for the price of a rouble or two. They were for the most part such Chinese as had, in peacetime, served the Russians as interpreters, business employees, and couriers. They knew that they were held in suspicion by the Japanese, but had not fled, as many of their countrymen had done, because they owned some little bit of land or had their families settled in the district. The Japanese gave them to understand that, if they wished to escape arrest as suspects, and to avoid other unpleasant consequences, they had better do what the Japanese required, that was, enter their service as spies. Others who were out of work or had lost all their worldly goods in the disorder and confusion caused by the war, were also ready to serve in that capacity. They had to be ready to do anything merely to live ; and the

* This word, I am informed by a Chinese scholar, means 'red beards' and denotes 'bandits.' *Translator's note.*

payment they received for the highly dangerous duties they undertook was miserable enough: not more than about five pounds a month for professional spies, just enough and no more to cover the purchase of mere necessities, for the cost of living had become very high.

The organisation of the military espionage was very systematic: along the army front bureaux were established under the command of officers whose business it was to regulate the service in their sections, to sift the information as it came in, and to pass it on to the General Staff. Corresponding to these offices were others on the Russian side, managed by Chinese, who had to arrange for sending spies to the towns behind the lines and to the concentration points of the Russian army. The spy worked with two or three persons who had to carry the information he had collected to the Chinese bureaux, from which it was conveyed by men who had to pass through the Russian outposts, in order to reach the Japanese front. As the depth of the Russian front never exceeded from fifty to sixty versts, a spy, assisted by three runners, could answer an inquiry put by the Japanese within three or four days and maintain an almost uninterrupted flow of reports.

The Chinese carriers of information were pedlars or poor coolies from the lowest class of the town population, and were absolutely indistinguishable from the beggars that swarmed in Manchuria. For conveying a message they were paid five or six roubles, and were hardly conscious of the hazards they ran; they were glad to be able to earn their daily bread by such simple means.

Another kind of Japanese espionage organisation consisted in the formation of completely independent groups of three or four spies, operating from a particular base and entrusted with the solution of some very accurately defined problem, such as, for example, the reconnoitring of one specified section of the army, the observation of movements of troops, etc. Such a group of spies was always provided with considerable financial means, to enable it to establish a centre consisting of a small shop, very often a baker's shop, frequented by people of every social class, including officers and soldiers, from whose conversation much important information could be gleaned, and to whom casual questions might be put without exciting suspicion. The latter part of the work, being rather delicate, was always performed by the senior member of the group, while the others interested went about as waiters or attendants or, outside the house, as pedlars.

The stricter the Russian measures of counter-espionage became, the more perilous, of course, grew the transmission of military intelligence. To conceal it, new devices were continually being invented and employed. Reports were carried in the soles of shoes or worked into the pigtail. They also used the trick, tried everywhere among spies, of sewing them into the seams of footwear and clothing, the message being written on a tiny bit of paper very tightly rolled.

Information of very great importance was not put in writing at all. It had to be committed to memory and communicated orally to the officer in charge of the Japanese bureau.

A spy, in the garb of a Chinese coolie or pedlar, who carried no written communication, who avoided lonely or little-used tracks, whose identity was submerged in the vast multitude of Chinese ever on the move from place to place, was practically certain of escaping detection. Only through some rare accident could he be unmasked. And in the circumstances it is not a matter of astonishment that the Japanese were informed of almost every step taken by the Russians.

That the cavalry corps of General Mishchenko was going to make a surprise attack on Inkou and the Japanese railway connections was known at Japanese headquarters two weeks beforehand, and actually sooner than the plan was made known to the participants in the raid. As the spies' reports had furnished the smallest details of the scheme the most thorough counter-measures were taken, with the result that the Russian enterprise was an absolute failure.

Before the Japanese set about their attack on the Na-Shao position, they had in their possession plans of the Russian fortifications. Upon these were marked the exact location of the batteries and of the mines, along with the positions of the electric connections for exploding them—a masterpiece of espionage. It was, therefore, an easy task for them to reduce the Russian artillery to silence, in spite of all concealment, and to render the mines harmless.

DRAMA AT HEADQUARTERS

By
SIR BASIL THOMSON

About the middle of 1915 we learned that on a steamer bound from Rotterdam to Buenos Aires was an Argentine citizen named Conrad Leyter, who was believed to be carrying dispatches from Berlin to the German Embassy in Madrid. Leyter was removed from the steamer and brought to London. He said he was a shipping clerk, that he had come to Europe for a holiday, and was now on his way back to Buenos Aires. He gave a long and rather wearisome account of his holiday adventures in Germany and Holland, and nothing could be done until the clockwork had run down. Then we said, " But why were you going to Spain ? " There was another burst of eloquence, but no reply to that particular question. Whenever he paused for breath he was asked, " Why were you going to Spain ? " At last he could bear it no more. He jumped from his chair and said, " Well, if you will know, I am going to Spain, and if you want to know why, I am carrying a dispatch to Prince Ratibor, the German Ambassador in Madrid."

" Thank you. And where is the dispatch ? "

" I have not got it. It is sewn in the lifebelt in my cabin."

That was all we wanted to know. Leyter went to an internment camp, the wireless was got to work, and in due course the dispatch was found in the lifebelt, as he said. It was quite useful.

Every now and then doubtful persons captured at sea came to us from far afield. In October, 1915, a boarding officer in the Mediterranean, who was examining passengers on board the blue-funnel liner *Anchises*, found a man who was carrying a false passport believed to be forged. He was detained and sent to Egypt. In Cairo the luck was against him. While he was being interrogated and his imagination was soaring in full flight, a British officer who had known him in former years chanced to pass through the room and recognised him. " Hallo, von Gumpenberg ! " he cried, slapping him on the back. After that it was useless to dissemble, and he gave his name as Baron Otto von Gumpenberg, and said that he had been squadron commander in the Death's Head Hussars, and had been involved in a scandal for which he was

arrested and imprisoned for seven months. On his release he became a vagabond adventurer. In Constantinople he was aide-de-camp to Enver Pasha ; later he attached himself to Prince Wilhelm of Wied in his futile attempt to govern Albania. When war broke out he was called back to Germany to serve as a trooper, and, according to his own account, he served for eighteen months on the Russian Front with such distinction that when he returned wounded to Germany his commission was restored to him and he was posted to the command of a troop at the Front ; but at this moment there happened to be a scheme for stirring up the tribes in North Africa, and he was dispatched to see what he could do with the Senussi. About that time the Senussi had captured a number of Italian prisoners, and von Gumperberg accounted for being on the *Anchises* by saying that he was being sent to the Senussi to obtain the release of these prisoners. We were impolite enough to express entire disbelief in this story. Unfortunately, in return for his confession made in Egypt he had been promised that he would be treated as an officer prisoner of war, and he had to be interned at Donnington Hall. His real object, no doubt, was to direct the hostile movements of the Senussi and other tribes against the Allies.

The Germans now adopted commerce as the best cover for their agents. England was to be flooded with commercial travellers, especially travellers in cigars. The censor began to pick up messages containing orders for enormous quantities of cigars for naval ports such as Portsmouth, Chatham, Devonport, and Dover. The senders turned out to be furnished with Dutch passports, though their nationality was doubtful. Now something happened to be known about their supposed employers in Holland, who kept one little back office in which a few mouldy samples were exposed, and yet here they were with a traveller in the Southern Counties and another sending orders from Newcastle. Naval ratings are not abstainers from tobacco, but they are not known to be in the habit of consuming large quantities of Havana cigars. One of the travellers named Haicke Petrus Marinus Janssen and the other named Wilhelm Johannes Roos were found doing the sights of London. Janssen was questioned first. He was a self-possessed person of about thirty years of age, and he claimed to be a sailor. He knew no German, in fact he had never been in Germany, and, being a Dutchman, he had a dislike for Germans. Why, he was asked, did his employers, Dierks & Co., engage a sailor to travel in cigars? To that he had no answer except that he had been unsuccessful in obtaining a berth as officer on a steamer. A friend had

introduced him to Mr. Dierks because he could speak English and was looking for work. He said that he was the only traveller that Dierks had in England. We asked him whether he knew a man named Roos. "No," he said, he had never heard of him. He was then sent to another room while Roos was brought in. He, too, was a seaman, a big, powerful man with the cut of a German seaman. He, too, said that he was a traveller for Dierks & Co.; that Dierks had two travellers, himself and Janssen. Would he know Janssen if he saw him? Certainly he would. Janssen was brought again into the room. He made a faint sign with his eyes and lips to Roos, but of course it was too late. "Is this the man you say you know?" he was asked. He nodded, and Janssen was silent. On the way over to Cannon Row Roos suddenly dashed at a glass door which opened into the yard, smashed the panes, and jabbed his naked wrists on the jagged fragments of glass in the hope of cutting an artery. He was taken to Westminster Hospital to be bandaged, and later was removed to Brixton Prison, where he was put under observation as a potential suicide.

The code used by these men was simple enough. They would send telegrams for 10,000 Cabañas, 4,000 Rothschilds, 3,000 Coronas, and so on. A message telegraphed from Portsmouth of this kind would mean that there were three battleships, four cruisers, and ten destroyers in the harbour, and these messages, so interpreted, corresponded with the actual facts on the dates of the telegrams. Neither man could produce any evidence that he had transacted *bona fide* business with his cigars. They could not produce one genuine order. They were brought to trial for espionage and were convicted. A few days later both made confessions. Janssen actually gave some useful information about the German spy organisation in Holland. He said that his sympathies were really with us, and he could not understand how he had been tempted to serve the other side. It appeared that in 1913 he had actually been granted a silver medal by the Board of Trade for life-saving on the immigrant steamer *Volturno*, which was burnt at sea with the loss of 400 lives. Her wireless call for help was responded to by the vessel in which Janssen was serving, and he, among others, was instrumental in saving 500 lives. Roos feigned insanity in prison, and it was one of the pleas put forward by his counsel. There was, however, no medical support for this plea, and it was arranged that on 30th July both men should be executed in the Tower. They met their end stoically. Janssen was shot first. Roos asked as a last favour to be allowed to finish his cigarette.

That done, he threw it away with a gesture as though that represented all the vanities of this world, and then he sat down in the chair with quiet unconcern. The news of the execution soon reached Holland, and the Germans began to find it very difficult to obtain recruits from neutral countries.

During May and June, 1915, in about a fortnight, no less than seven enemy spies were arrested. The most spectacular were Reginald Roland, whose real name was George T. Breeckow, and Mrs. Lizzie Wertheim.

Breeckow was the son of a pianoforte manufacturer in Stettin, and he was himself a pianist. It is curious to reflect that professional musicians should have formed a respectable proportion of the detected spies. One would have thought that it was the last class that would be able to report intelligently on naval and military matters. Breeckow spoke English fluently, and knew enough Americanisms to pose plausibly as a rich American travelling in England for his health. Before he left Holland he was furnished with the address of Lizzie Wertheim, a German woman who had married a naturalised German and had thus acquired British nationality. She was a stout and rather flashy-looking person of the boarding-house type, and she had been in England for some years. She was separated from her husband, but on terms that made her independent. She was equally at home in Berlin, the Hague, and London.

Breeckow, who appeared to be possessed of a considerable sum of money, was at once accorded a warm welcome. The pair hired horses from a riding-school and rode in the park during the mornings. They took their luncheon at expensive restaurants, and Lizzie Wertheim became intoxicated with this kind of life and waxed so extravagant that Breeckow had to expostulate and report the matter to his employers. She would no longer travel without a maid.

It was decided between the two that the best working arrangement would be for the woman to do the field work, and for Breeckow to work up her reports in London and dispatch them to Holland. Mrs. Wertheim went to Scotland, hired a motor-car, and drove about the country picking up gossip about the Grand Fleet. Her questions to naval officers were, however, so imprudent that special measures were taken ; Breeckow's address was discovered, and in due course the two were brought to New Scotland Yard for interrogation. The artistic temperament of Breeckow was not equal to the ordeal. His pretence of being a rich American broke down immediately, and he was aghast to find out how much the police knew about his secret movements. Though he made

no confession, he returned to Cannon Row in a state of great nervous tension. Lizzie Wertheim, on the other hand, was tough, brazen, and impudent, claiming that as a British subject she had a right to travel where she would. She declined to sit still in her chair, but walked up and down the room, flirting a large silk handkerchief as if she was practising a new dancing step. Further inquiries showed that, unlike the previous American passports carried by spies, which were genuine documents stolen by the German Foreign Office, this passport was a forgery right through. The American Eagle on the official seal had his claws turned round the wrong way, and his tail lacked a feather or two. The very red paper on which the seal was impressed did not behave like the paper on genuine documents when touched with acid, nor was the texture of the passport paper itself quite the same. It also transpired that Breeckow had been in America continuously from 1908, that he had got into touch with von Papen's organisation, which had sent him back to Germany for service in this country. For this purpose he became an inmate of the Espionage School in Antwerp, where he was taught the tricks of the trade, which were quite familiar to us. He had also a commercial code for use when telegrams had to be sent.

Breeckow had maintained throughout that he knew no German, but his assurance began to break down in the loneliness of a prison cell. He had a strong imagination, and no doubt the thought that his female accomplice might be betraying him worked strongly on his feelings. One morning I went over with a naval officer to see how he was. There was a question about signing for his property, and he was sent into the room for the purpose. When he found himself alone with us he said suddenly, "Am I to be tried for my life?"

"I understand that you are to be tried."

"What is the penalty for what I have done?" (Up to this point he had made no confession.) "Is it death?"

"I do not know," I said. "You have not yet been tried."

"I can tell from your face that it is death. I must know. I have to think of my old mother in Stettin. I want to write a full confession." I told him that of course he was free to write what he pleased, but that anything he did write would almost certainly be used against him at his trial. "Never mind," he said, "I have carried the secret long enough. Now I want to tell the whole truth."

So paper and ink were supplied to him, and he wrote his confession.

As Mrs. Wertheim was a British subject and could claim trial by civil court the two were tried together at the Old Bailey on 20th September before three judges of the High Court, and were found guilty. Breeckow was sentenced to death and Mrs. Wertheim to ten years' penal servitude, as it was considered that she had acted under the man's influence. Breeckow appealed unsuccessfully, and his execution was fixed for 26th October at the Tower. The five weeks that elapsed between the sentence and the execution were extremely trying to the persons responsible for his safety. He had broken down completely, and was demented by fear. On the morning of his execution he was almost in a state of collapse. At the last moment he produced a lady's handkerchief, probably the relic of some past love affair, and asked that it might be tied over his eyes instead of the usual bandage, but it was too small. It had to be knotted to the bandage and then tied. He was shivering with agitation, and just before the shots were fired there was a sudden spasm. It was believed afterwards that he had actually died of heart failure before the bullets reached him.

Lizzie Wertheim was removed to Aylesbury Convict Prison to undergo her sentence, and there she died some two years after the Armistice.

Of all the spies that were convicted and executed the man for whom I felt most sorry was Fernando Buschman. He was a gentleman by birth, he had no need of money, for he was married to the daughter of a rich soap manufacturer in Dresden, who had kept him liberally supplied with funds for his studies in aviation. He was quite a good violinist, and he had all the instincts of a cultivated musician. He was of German origin, but his father had become a naturalised Brazilian, and he himself had Latin blood in his veins. He was born in Paris, but his boyhood was spent in Brazil, where he attended a German school. He had invented an aeroplane, and in 1911 the French Government allowed him to use the aerodrome at Issy for experimental purposes. For the three years before the War he had been travelling all over Europe, and when hostilities broke out the German Secret Service got hold of him. He had been to Spain, to Genoa, and to Hamburg, and in 1915 he was in Barcelona and Madrid, and then in Flushing, Antwerp, and Rotterdam. It speaks volumes for the stupidity of the directors of the German Espionage School in Antwerp that they should have selected as a disguise for such a man as Buschman the rôle of commercial traveller. The imposture was bound to be discovered at once. He was far too well dressed and well spoken, and

he knew nothing whatever about trade. He arrived in London with a forged passport, and put up at a good hotel with his violin, not usually part of the luggage of a commercial traveller. After a few days he moved to lodgings in Loughborough Road, Brixton, and thence to lodgings in South Kensington. This he thought was enough to fit him for moving about in England. He visited Portsmouth and Southampton, and from certain minute notes found among his papers it became evident that his one qualification—his knowledge of aeronautics—was not to be turned to account; he was to be employed as a naval spy. Unfortunately for him he ran short of money, and was compelled to write to Holland for fresh supplies. He was arrested at his lodgings in South Kensington, and was found to be quite penniless. When the detective arrived he said, "What have you against me? I will show you everything." Then he reeled off his lesson. He was in England for the purpose of selling cheese, bananas, potatoes, safety razors, and odds and ends, and in France he had sold picric acid, cloth, and rifles. He implied that his employers did a miscellaneous business almost unrivalled in commercial annals, but when he said that they were Dierks & Co., of the Hague, we pointed out that they occupied one room and were cigar merchants. Moreover, it was found that his passport was written in the well-known handwriting of Flores, who used to instruct German spies in Rotterdam. This man had been a schoolmaster, and his characteristic handwriting was well known. There was also a letter from Gneist, the German Consul-General in Rotterdam, from Colonel Ostertag, the German Military Attaché in Holland, and from two persons who were known to be active in recruiting for the German Secret Service. He was tried at the Westminster Guildhall on 20th September, 1915, the day of the trial of Breeckow and Mrs. Wertheim at the Old Bailey, and was sentenced to death. I know that persons who were present at the trial were impressed by his manly bearing and his frankness. After his sentence he was not separated from his violin. It was his great solace through the long hours of waiting. He asked for it again on his removal to the Tower on the night before his execution, and played till a late hour. When they came for him in the morning he picked it up and kissed it, saying, "Good-bye, I shall not want you any more." He refused to have his eyes bandaged, and faced the rifles with a courageous smile. How differently the artistic temperament works in men and women!

A NARROW ESCAPE

By

CAPT. G. A. HILL

At the outbreak of war I was in Northern British Columbia, fishing on the Skeena river, some twenty miles from Prince Rupert and, like most men, I hurried to join up.

Owing to my languages, I found myself a full-blown interpreter as soon as we arrived in France. Arranging for billets, dealing with irate villagers, purchasing food from avaricious shopkeepers was not very amusing but I was thoroughly interested in the examination of prisoners and their documents, the taking down of their statements, and from little pieces of information building up, as one does a jig-saw puzzle, a complete picture.

The Canadians were in the line during the battle of Neuve Chapelle, and it was at Laventie, near Estaires, that I saw my first spy caught red-handed during the war.

He was an ordinary French peasant, a traitor who had been bought by the enemy and was used as a post office, i.e., he was not actively employed on getting information, but received messages which he attached to carrier pigeons and dispatched across the German lines when the coast was clear.

He had been under suspicion for some days, for he was constantly being found in places where he had no business to be, but he always had some sort of an excuse ready—he was either looking for stray cattle, collecting wood, or searching for something.

The civilian population in the zone of operations caused enormous difficulties to the military authorities, but quite naturally they would not leave their farmhouses unless they were forced. It was a strange sight indeed to see a peasant stoically ploughing his field while shells whizzed over his head and exploded around him.

We actually were billeted in the farm of this particular spy. One evening when he came back to his farm he was stopped and a pigeon was found tucked away in his coat. He was put under arrest, and, of course knew he was doomed. The Canadians handed him over to the French authorities who, I presume, dealt with him in due course.

There was a terrible scene just before he was marched off. His wife and sister must have been well aware of his treachery, and their wailings continued long after the man had been taken away.

Early in April we moved up to the Ypres front and I was put entirely on Intelligence work. About the middle of the month our division took up a position round St. Julien. We were expecting some sort of an attack at any time, and it was most important for us to know whether the enemy were getting any reinforcements. As my knowledge of German was exceptional, night after night I slipped out between the lines to listen to the German troops in their trenches. One could tell by the accent whether the soldiers were Bavarians or Saxons, and if we knew that a section of line was held by Bavarians, and suddenly either the Bavarians disappeared and were replaced by Saxons, or Bavarians and Saxons were there together, by putting two and two together after a certain time one could reasonably infer whether reinforcements had arrived and whether the German line on this section was being strengthened for the purposes of attack.

It was a nerve-racking business, wandering through No Man's Land, and horrible, because for months there had been intermittent fighting all round the sodden, reeking, clay fields over which I crawled. One night, when I was close to the German trenches, I was challenged and the challenge was followed by a hand grenade. The result was a shattered knee-cap. But my luck was in and I was found by one of our own patrols and hauled back to our lines. When I came to, I was lying on a stretcher, and as I looked down towards my feet a sudden horror seized me. When I had crawled out into No Man's Land I had been wearing a Gordon tartan kilt, for by now I was attached to the Canadian Scottish Brigade. But flung across me, hanging over the stretcher was a kilt of the Seaforth tartan. Of course the kilts had been mixed up at one of the advance dressing-stations, but the fact that I was wearing the wrong tartan worried my semi-delirious brain far more than my wound.

A few weeks later I received my commission and after a pleasant convalescence was assigned a post on the Intelligence Staff at the War Office. Then, as I got stronger and was able to walk about again, I was sent to the East coast on counter-espionage work. During this time nothing very sensational occurred in connection with my work, but I was learning the ropes and the experience gained during those six or seven weeks made me thoroughly conversant with the work of counter-espionage service.

A telegram summoned me back to the War Office, where I was ordered to report at a certain room.

"Mr. Hill," said a civilian, who had the bushiest eyebrows of any man I had ever met, "do you speak Russian?"

"Yes, sir," I said, and a warm glow crept up my spine. I was very anxious to go to Russia, and to my mind the question could only mean that I was to be ordered to that front.

But the authorities had other ideas, for Dr. Ross,* who was the civilian gentleman, said, "Then you will please learn Bulgarian in a month," and my hopes fell to the ground.

For the next four weeks I was working hard at the War Office with a Bulgarian teacher, and at the same time went through a special course in Intelligence work. It was a most thorough course. Experts from Scotland Yard lectured me on shadowing and recognising the signs of being shadowed. I was taught the methods of using invisible inks. I learned a system of codes and was primed with all the dodges which are useful to spies.

It happened at that time that a British spy had escaped from the German occupied parts of Belgium. For days before his escape he had lain in a loft watching German reinforcements entraining at a certain junction. Hour after hour he wrote in invisible ink on grease-proof paper the number of wagons, and the type of troops entrained, and counted the guns which were loaded. And at last when he had all the information he wanted, he wrapped his grease-proof paper round some particularly fat ham sandwiches, which he put into the saddle-bag of his push-bike, and pedalled off for the Dutch frontier.

At the frontier a long queue of people was waiting to have documents examined, and he whiled away the time by munching his sandwiches as he slowly moved up to the control post. When he reached the examining officials he politely wrapped up those sandwiches which he had not had time to consume and quite openly put them into his saddle-bag. The officer examined his papers, found them in order, looked through his saddle-bag to see that he was not carrying any correspondence, and passed him through into Holland. Within thirty-six hours he was in London, and we were developing the writing on the grease-proof paper.

How I admired that agent and his pluck! I am glad to say he came through the war quite safely, and only a few weeks ago I met him at the Conservative Club.

At the end of a month my Bulgarian was almost word perfect, and I made preparations for Salonica. We had recently

* Now Sir Edward Denison Ross, Director of the School of Oriental Studies.

stopped a neutral vessel carrying Bulgarians from the United States, and we had reason to suppose that one of them was engaged on a mission of some importance. The Bulgarians were at Alexandra Palace, which had been converted into a civilian internment camp.

It was decided that I should spend a day and a night at the Palace as a prisoner of war, and accordingly (dressed in mufti, and with a second-hand bag which I bought in the Charing Cross Road, and some odds and ends such as a third-class passenger might possess) I set off for the Alexandra Palace in a motor-car, escorted by two military policemen who thought I was a genuine Bulgarian.

The prisoners at the Alexandra Palace were a mixed lot—Germans, Austrians, Bulgars and Turks—but in a way they were well off, as many of them had either friends or wives and relations, who, owing to their British status, were not under arrest, and were able to visit them.

I found my little party of newly-taken Bulgarian prisoners and told them that I had met with a similar misfortune on my way to Copenhagen. My story was that I was a Bulgarian born in America, and that I had decided to go back to do my duty in Bulgaria. It was the man in whom I was particularly interested who gave me hints as to the examination to which I would be subjected, and what I should and should not say and do. He had been through the experience a few days before.

At the end of thirty-six hours I had his story. He had been going to set up a new espionage bureau in Scandinavia which was intended to be a clearing-house for the information collected by his organisation in America about the purchasing of munitions and armaments by the Allies. At the end of that period I was marched off for interrogation, and, of course, never went back to the Alexandra Palace. Within a few hours I was on my way to the Near East.

At this time Salonica was in a state of siege and a series of fortifications, most suitably known as the "bird cage," had been constructed from the Gulf of Thinos to the mouth of the Vardar. I was busy collecting every kind of information I could get from beyond the enemy's lines, and training agents who would make suitable spies. It was not easy work. As often as not the best potential spies were totally illiterate and it was necessary to teach them even how they were to assimilate and remember the information which they gathered.

I felt that with my experience of Intelligence work I could be of greater use if I learned to fly, and luckily was able to

bring my chief round to the same view ; and in due course I became a fully-fledged pilot in the R.F.C.

One of my reasons for joining the R.F.C. was to be able to drop our spies into enemy territory.

Nico Kotzov was one of my first passengers. He was a Serbian patriot who had been in the enemy's country nine or ten times and always brought back very accurate and valuable information. He was a big-boned, tall man with a long grey beard, and had a very grand manner. He wore native dress, a sheepskin cap and a heavy brown homespun cape, and always carried a shepherd's staff.

We wanted information from an inaccessible part of the country, and as this information was urgently needed it was decided to drop him by aeroplane. I took him up for a couple of trial flights, and although he did not enjoy the experience very much he was quite determined to go. He knew the country where we were going to land, and I explained to him that I wanted the landing-ground to be as much like our aerodrome as possible.

During the trial flights I asked him to point out to me, when we were flying low, grounds that he thought were suitable, and while occasionally his judgment was very much at fault, on the whole I thought that he had grasped the general requirements necessary for a landing-ground.

With luck, providing you are not attacked by enemy fighting planes, there is no difficulty in flying over strange country, but the art of dropping a spy consists in doing so unobserved. It is necessary to land your man and get away unseen, so the operation is conducted as a rule just before sunrise, after sunset, or on a very brilliant moonlit night.

The Hague regulations respecting the customs of war were drawn up before man learnt to fly, and in consequence there was no rule under the general spies clauses of these regulations regarding an airman who dropped spies in enemy's territory. But the Germans and Bulgarians had intimated that they would treat the actual pilots of aeroplanes landing spies as spies and shoot them.

This added to the risk of dropping a spy over the line, for if one made a bad landing and crashed one was for it.

General aviation had not then been developed to the perfection it has reached to-day, and there were no aeroplanes fitted with air brakes to make a low-speed landing possible.

Early one morning I collected Nico from the hut he had slept in and took him across to the hangars where my machine had already been wheeled out and was waiting.

Despite a large mug of hot coffee I felt very cold and shivery.

Once again I pulled out the map and worked out the course with Nico, who told me where I would find a suitable landing-field ; we were to arrive a little before daybreak, when there would be just sufficient light to land.

As we climbed into the machine the sergeant in charge of the pigeons brought along a little cage with six of our best carrier pigeons in it, and at the last minute a felt cover was slipped over them to keep them warm at the altitude we should reach during our journey.

I ran the engine up. Everything was all right.

I signalled to the sergeant to pull away the chocks and we taxied out into the dark aerodrome. I opened the engine full out and we were away.

I had to do a stiff climb in the air in order to be able to cross a mountain range, and the higher I got the less I liked the job before me. The flight was uneventful. I picked up the various objectives that were serving me—together with a compass—as a guide, and got over the country that we were to land upon in the scheduled time.

It was getting light and I throttled back my engine, so that it was just ticking over, in order to land.

We lost height rapidly and I could faintly make out the ground below me, which seemed fairly suitable. As a precautionary measure I made up my mind to circle it just once more. Suddenly I noticed that the whole of the field selected by Nico for our landing was dotted by giant boulders. To land on that field would be suicide. I climbed into the air again, and when I had got sufficiently high, switched off my engine so as to be able to make Nico hear me and told him that his selection was no good as a landing-ground. He said simply that I had told him nothing about boulders, and that he imagined we would hop over them. We were in a B.E.2.E. bus and the only way to start the propeller going was to dive vertically. The force of the air drove round the propeller and if all went well one's engine started again. So I dived. The propeller started and we climbed once more into the air.

All hope of landing that morning had to be given up, but as it was rapidly getting light I hoped to be able to pick out a suitable landing-ground for the next day, and through my glasses located a dry river bed which promised to be the best place for landing, and back we went to the aerodrome.

Nico was most crestfallen at his mistake, and thought that I had been so angry with him that I had dived purposely to punish him, and it took a couple of hours of hard talk and a

thorough exposition of aero engines before I could convince him that I simply had to dive to start my engine going.

Next morning we made the trip again and I safely landed my passenger. Within ten days he had dispatched all six pigeons and on the return home of the last one I took over a further cage of pigeons and dropped them from a parachute over the spot where I had landed Nico. These also returned home safely. In all I dropped Nico three times over the line.

But not all my passengers were as good as Nico.

On one occasion it was essential to drop a spy over the lines before we had even had time to give him a trial flight. The passenger was a Greek. He was looking forward to his flight and was a boastful creature.

It was a dirty morning with bad visibility and gusts of strong wind ground swept the aerodrome. My attention was fully occupied in taking off and gaining altitude. I had to climb through four layers of cloud, and in those days once one got into a cloud one was completely blinded. Now there are special instruments to make cloud-flying simple. We had been in the air half an hour before I had a moment to turn round to see how my passenger was getting on.

He was petrified with terror. His eyes were starting out of his head, and he was being violently sick. I smiled and tried to cheer him, but it was no good. I did not think it was possible for any man to be as sick so long and so regularly. I picked out the landing-ground, planed down and made a beautiful landing, but on turning round found that my passenger had gone into a dead faint and was huddled up in the cockpit. It was no good landing him in that condition and so back I went to the aerodrome. My passenger was still unconscious, and nothing ever induced him after he had recovered to go into the air again.

One of my other passengers was a man called Petrov who loved flying, and even when not being dropped over the lines would come down to the aerodrome to cadge a joy ride.

One evening, just about sundown, he climbed into his seat behind me and was given a basket with four pigeons and off we went.

He was a joyous passenger and would sing Serbian songs at the top of his voice, and even the roar of the engine could not drown the bass sounds coming from his lungs.

Those flights over the Balkans were wonderful. The mountains beneath looked like the great waves one sees in the Atlantic.

The sun had just slipped behind a mountain, and the

valley in which we were to land was plunged in shadow. I spiralled down in order to lose height rapidly and circled round our landing-ground. Everything seemed clear and there was not a soul about—the conditions appeared ideal.

How often ideal conditions are a snare and a delusion! On landing we struck a furrow which jarred the bus badly, and worse still, stopped the propeller.

The only way in those days to land a spy and to take off successfully after having done so was to throttle back one's engine so that the propeller just kept turning round. As soon as the spy had landed one revved up the engine and took off again. When I first did this work it had always been a nightmare to me that my propeller might stop, for even under good conditions propeller swinging was a tricky operation and required a great deal of knack.

When learning to fly one was instructed in the art of propeller swinging, and before qualifying one was given practical tests. I was never very good at this business, principally because of my build.

I am not tall and have very short arms, I have always been rather round, and it was all I could do to reach the propeller, let alone swing it and swing myself clear in so doing. Failure to swing clear means nine times out of ten that the propeller will hit the swinger, and many a man has been knocked out at this job.

And here we were in the enemy's country with a propeller that had stopped. Petrov hopped out of the bus and at once, volunteered to swing the propeller, and I showed him how to do it.

The process in theory is quite a simple one. The pilot calls out to the swinger, "switch off," and the swinger then turns the propeller in order to suck sufficient petrol vapour into the cylinders. When this has been done the pilot switches on the ignition and the swinger calls out "contact," which is the signal for the propeller to be given a sharp, quick swing and for the person doing it to step aside.

Should the engine for some reason or other not start, the man swinging the propeller calls out, "switch off," and the process is started all over again.

For ten minutes our voices could be heard calling "switch off—contact—switch off."

But nothing happened, the engine simply would not fire.

Petrov was running with perspiration due to his exertion. I was bathed in the sweat of fear.

We rested for a moment, then I climbed out of my seat and went over the petrol leads and magneto points. Every-

thing seemed in order. Then to our horror in the rapidly deepening twilight we saw a cavalry patrol approaching.

Petrov said that he would have one more swing, but before doing so we decided to release the carrier pigeons.

We had instructions in the event of likely capture immediately to get rid of the pigeons, so that the enemy could not use them to send information calculated to mislead our intelligence department. Off flew the four pigeons. And then like a demon possessed, Petrov started swinging the propeller. Still nothing happened.

The cavalry patrol had spotted us. I think at first they thought it was one of their own machines. Then they must have got suspicious, for they started trotting over towards us. Suddenly the engine fired. Petrov raced round to the fuselage and leapt into his seat. The cavalry patrol broke into a gallop and called upon us to stop. I opened up the throttle and we were away, but before we had left the ground the patrol had opened fire. Their shooting was good, for we found when we got back to our aerodrome half a dozen bullet-holes in the fuselage.

THE TRIUMPH OF A SPY

By

MAJOR GEORGES LADOUX

The nickname of " Zozo " which Marthe had given to her friend the aviator has been retained by me here, although it may bring a smile to the lips of those who know this dark-haired Slav with thick eyebrows beneath which his eyes glow like coals of fire.

It seems that Zozo is the diminutive of " z'oiseau." He was certainly the airiest of winged creatures as he circled round Marthe's Caudron plane, tracing marvellous curves, when the Skylark herself took flight.

To-day Zozo, his legs broken twice over, goes limping and hopping cheerily through life. He indeed suggests the captive birds which fortune-tellers at country fairs used to exhibit when I was a child, a match replacing a leg that was lost.

No stranger partnership could have been imagined than that of Marthe with Zozo. There was nothing but contrast and opposition in common between these two flight comrades. They were like the frozen snow and the blinding sun seen alternately across the steppes of Southern Russia.

Indeed, that was the region from which Zozo had come straight to us, escaping from the death sentence passed against him by the Tiflis courts. In the summer of 1905, he had been the chief instigator of the revolt in Georgia. Zozo was, in fact, one of our very first Bolsheviks.

When he applied to us for admission to the Counter-Espionage Service, about the middle of 1916, he already wore both the *Croix de Guerre* and the *Médaille militaire*, awarded to him after an engagement in which he had two enemy aeroplanes against him, and he crashed.

I hesitated for a long while, before employing him. Not that I was prompted to distrust him. A true revolutionary is rarely a traitor. But I did not see just how I could make use of this fierce breaker of bonds. The counter-espionage business needs, above all, active agents capable of putting a constant check upon their imagination, even where passive resistance is lacking.

" You already have Marthe to hold with a tight rein," my

prudent assistant said to me, when I broached the subject to him in my office. "What will become of us, if we also have to keep her Zozo between the shafts?"

So I had long been at a loss to know how to put Marthe and Zozo in harness together. But, as has been seen, my decision was finally that I had no choice but to risk the experiment.

From that moment a species of harmony was established, causing things to run with remarkable smoothness. Particularly one sudden emergency which arose proved that no better team could possibly have been found.

The German General Staff, which never feared to take initiatives and which was never discouraged by reverses, had removed the management of the propaganda service in neutral countries from the hands of poor Erzberger, who laments so loudly over the fact in his Memoirs. The execution of this work had then been divided up among the various agents stationed abroad. So it came about that von Kolberg unexpectedly saw a fortune of five hundred thousand pesetas placed at his disposal for this purpose. But he had not the remotest idea as to how he could spend it while remaining strictly within the instructions which accompanied the package of bank-notes. He was told explicitly and peremptorily that the money was to be used for the purpose of "beating down the morale of the Frenchman." And thereby his task was rendered very complicated indeed.

The five million francs or so which, in two instalments, had been put by the Germans into the supple fingers of the former barber, Bolo Pasha, and the ten millions which they had just imprudently entrusted to the sieve-like hands of the youthful and prodigal Pierre Lenoir,* had not sufficed to teach prudence to our adversaries. Their policy now consisted in obtaining from professional peace agitators what the military operations had been unable to do for them.

When Marthe returned from a surprising expedition to the Argentine, the pesetas and the instructions had already been brought to von Kolberg by the submarine O-202, subsequently interned at Cadiz.

The Baron, very proud of the adventure of his woman agent in spite of the detail that her mission was a failure, wished to present her to the commander of the submarine. It had immediately occurred to him that she was just the right person to give prompt satisfaction to the demands of the General Staff.

What may have helped him to reach this conclusion was

* Both condemned and executed, in 1918 and 1919 respectively, for intelligence with the enemy in Press matters.

the fact that Marthe herself, upon hearing of his windfall and the string tied to it, had promptly said to herself:

"Oh! All that money must not benefit aliens. We must have just as big a share of it as I can get."

Von Kolberg, unconscious of her little plot against his secret pocket-book, was happily inspired to take her to dine aboard the submarine. After leaving table, Marthe leaned idly against the rail, throwing crumbs to the fish and listening to the conversation between the two naval officers. Her proximity aroused no suspicions, because she had faithfully lived up to my recommendation about pretending to know no German at all.

From just a word caught here and there, she gathered that the two officers were arranging details for the escape of the corsair, the Baron having, in fact, come down for this express purpose.

She informed us of this as soon as she had returned to Madrid, and we considered that she had made excellent use of her time, even before we learned of her additional activities.

Presently von Kolberg changed from German to French, as he turned to Marthe and asked:

"Don't you happen to know, among your friends, an anarchist? A real one, the genuine article, who could preach revolutionary ideas in France?"

"Why, Zozo, my fiancé, of course!" she exclaimed with her usual swiftness of decision. "You seem to have forgotten that our own 'indicator' was formerly the leader of the Georgian revolution. He has been wounded, he is covered with medals and palms,* he's adored by all the 'marraines' of France, and he has now been honourably discharged from the army. If I write to him, he can be in Madrid within a week."

"Write, then," von Kolberg said, overjoyed at the opportunity to show his comrade, the submarine commander, how readily a naval officer of his calibre could solve difficult problems.

He continued:

"Don't tell him what I expect him to do, and don't make any promises whatsoever. Just see that he gets here as soon as possible. You understand? I want to beat von Strasse in the race."

Von Kolberg and poor Marthe as well as the unfortunate Zozo himself were, however, soon to learn the wisdom of the proverb about making haste slowly.

* Affixed to the *Croix de Guerre* ribbon in recognition of additional meritorious acts.

Zozo arrived in Spain at the end of June, responding to the mysteriously worded appeal authorised by the Baron. He put up at the Palace Hotel so as to be within ready call of Marthe, but he was prudent though prompt in establishing connections with her. The Baron did not wish them to be seen together; and perhaps he was somewhat jealous of this "fiancé," while being perfectly aware of all the advantages presented by the alleged sentimental link.

They met usually in Marthe's room, where several long conferences were held with the Baron himself. Marthe had prompted Zozo for the part he must play by saying to him simply:

"You are the most dangerous of anarchists."

The instruction sufficed for business purposes; and in the intervals Zozo kept out of trouble by assuming the character of a lover so entranced at being near his "fiancée" that he was little less than idiotic.

The first interview between von Kolberg and Zozo very nasurally took the form of a relentless *questionnaire*. What the Baron did not suspect, throughout, was that this former revolutionary was, as he has himself admitted on various occasions, an expert at leg-pulling. It must be remarked, too, that Marthe did her utmost to help mystify the Baron, not only before the quizzing but after; and we have seen how great an adept she was at such things.

I assume that the statement relative to the facts of his life as made by Bozo to the Baron, was in keeping with the memorandum he had handed to me. So I need not repeat the details here.

When the quizzing had come to an end, von Kolberg attempted to draw deductions:

"I now know what you have done in the past. What I fail to see is, how you can help me in the future. France is not a country open to revolutionary ideas, like Georgia. We learned that, at the declaration of war. We had counted on political dissensions there and the active support which the Socialists had promised us, but we were mistaken. Since then we have spent much money in sheer loss, endeavouring to put the French people on their guard against the poverty and privations which will overwhelm the land immediately after our victory, which is certain. Our 'Political Section' must have adopted wrong methods, and the huge sums put at its disposal have been inadequately applied, for we have hitherto failed completely in all our efforts.

"That is why the Director of the War Operations has just taken our propaganda into his own hands. I am therefore

responsible for large sums already sent to me for this purpose, and more is to follow. What can it matter to us——"

The Baron changed his tone, speaking with pride as he continued :

"What can it matter to us, if we spend for our secret services the cost of one day of warfare, that is to say, nearly two hundred and fifty million francs, provided we thereby economise the cost of several months of hostilities for Germany, and for all the world too! What we seek is not so much to achieve the glory of victory, as to introduce at last into the world German method and German order."

Theoretically true, the words spoken by the Baron were logical in appearance and superficially irrefutable. But Zozo, the intellectual grandson of the venerable grandmother of the Russian Revolution, Brechko-Brechkovsky, was the fellow-disciple of Jean Grave and Sebastien Faure, of Roubanovitch and Rojanoff, in the early school of anarchy; he had furthermore been a co-signer with Lenin of the Socialist Revolutionary Pact, and he was personally a pure anarchist.

Accordingly, Zozo's response took the form of a violent outburst :

"You talk to me about German order. I was formerly familiar with Russian order. Do you believe, my dear Baron, that they are so very different? Or that they are not the brothers of French order, which is drowning out strikes in streams of blood; or of British order, which holds two hundred and fifty million Hindus crushed down in order to avert possibilities of rebellion?

"No! Bourgeois order is everywhere the same, you see. It is like a grave, or a galley in which the slaves, chained to their oars, have been rowing without respite for centuries, under the menace of the lash or the knout, and all for the profit of a few slave-traders.

"The people are starving—that's order.

"There is neither justice nor even pity for the workman or the native—that's order.

"There is neither education nor rest—that is also order.

"Prison and the penitentiary—that's your order, eternally.

"That is the order we won't have anything further to do with. After this war, in which millions of our own will have fallen—by order—other millions will come home, in waves followed by other waves, breaking in blood-stained foam, to annihilate your famous Social order and replace it at last by plain Human order."

The Baron von Kolberg, utterly amazed, tried to stop this flow of words.

"And yet," he interrupted, "you have fought side bv side with the French bourgeois against the German bourgeois——"

"You have failed to understand me," Zozo returned, "just as the French officers failed to understand me. Seeing me rashly fly to fight single-handed against five—five of your aeroplanes, sir—they believed I was serving France against Germany. They covered me with money and with decorations which I accepted like the blows in the face given to me formerly by the Cossacks, guardians of the Throne and of God.

"Each decoration splashed across my chest, like each wound from the knout seaming my face, was to me like another stroke from the avenging ploughshare tracing the furrows in which the seed is slowly germinating for the harvest of the Revolution to come."

Von Kolberg, bewildered by this avalanche of flaming words, which may indeed have been sincere at the moment they were uttered by this experienced leg-puller, still endeavoured to hold his own. Thinking of the use he must make of his budget for the exclusive benefit of revolutionary propaganda in France, he asked almost timidly :

"You might tell me, at all events, what you plan to do with the money I shall entrust to you."

"If I knew you believed that a single penny out of all your millions, Baron, was to be devoted to propaganda in favour of Germany," Zozo replied, "I should wish you a very good day, and I should curse Marthe for bringing me here. I came to you for the same reason which made me serve the French yesterday. I have no desire to serve either of you, but only my brothers without a country."

The Baron was now absolutely delighted. He said to himself :

Neither Erzberger nor von Strasse will ever be able to find such a champion."

Aloud, he said :

"I shall put in your hands one hundred thousand pesetas. But since you cannot cross the frontier with Spanish bank-notes to such an amount on your person, you will leave Madrid in a car with us to-morrow. We shall arrange to change the money at a place I know. Men in my service will then take you across."

Zozo nodded his assent. He was being left practically a free hand, and he was well satisfied.

"But," the Baron added solemnly, "I warn you that I

hold Marthe as hostage. If you betray us, she must atone for you."

"The Russian General Martinoff told me exactly the same thing at Tiflis, long ago," Zozo replied with a broad grin. "I had to get out of the place, leaving my fiancée behind as hostage. I pledged my word to the general that if he let me go I would stop the peasants at the very doors of the city, after I myself had incited them to rise up."

"What happened?" von Kolberg inquired, as he poured out a glass of excellent port for his new agent.

"Oh! Everything happened perfectly naturally as a matter of course," Zozo resumed his narrative. "As soon as I was free, I put myself once more at the head of the movement. For four entire days we held a division of the Russian army at bay in a suburb of Tiflis."

"You had forgotten your fiancée, then?"

"Not in the least. She herself had told me what I must do, exactly as Marthe would, in similar circumstances. Wouldn't you, Marthe?"

As he put the question he turned towards the airwoman, who for an answer gave a careless flick to the ash from her Valencia cigarette.

Zozo continued soberly:

"The Cossacks killed her. But two days after her death, General Martinoff was blown up with his coach."

"Luckily, we have a motor-car to-day," the Baron concluded with a laugh.

"Horse-carriage or automobile, what does it matter? Every man bears his own destiny with him," returned the Russian fatalist.

Indeed, Fate itself seems to have had something to do with the sequel, certain details of which nobody was ever able to explain to our complete satisfaction.

The first news of the accident which followed was brought to us by the French Press, whose indiscretion and thoroughly comprehensible indignation proved highly embarrassing at the time.

Early in June, a big Paris daily published an article headlined "An Interesting Accident," running as follows and quoted from the Madrid *Heraldo*:

> "At the Partridge Pass, the night before last at ten o'clock, an automobile accident occurred just opposite the well-known restaurant, Casa Camorra. Several foreigners were rather seriously injured.
>
> "The car was proceeding at a normal speed, when

at the point named it crossed another car going in the opposite direction. The two powerful searchlights of the second car blinded the driver of the first, who lost his bearings and ran into a telegraph post.

" The victims were :

" Hans von Kolberg, a wound seven centimetres in length and three in depth, beneath the chin ; Joseph D——, a landowner, born in Gori, Russia, and naturalised French, complete fracture of the knee-cap and the femur (his condition is serious) ; Ernest R——, chauffeur, a Russian, numerous bruises and slight abrasions ; and Madame Marthe R——, a widow, born in Blamont, France, left leg injured and general contusions.

" They received the skilled care of Dr. Astola at the Casa Camorra, and were conveyed to their domicile in a car belonging to M. Alvaro de Loma, who happened to be passing that way.

" The authorities at Aravasa are in charge of the case. The automobile was completely wrecked. The German, von Kolberg, was driving at the time."

The French newspaper added comment as follows :

" We may now inform the reader that the Lord Hans von K—— is the Grand Master of the torpedoing committed off the Spanish coast. He is believed to have organised personally the excursions in the Mediterranean, and incidentally the supplies, of the famous submarine U-35, which was in Carthagena on June 20, 1916. Pray give careful consideration to this date.

" It may also be well for the reader to know that two express trains and the Sud-Express pass daily between Madrid and Irun. It is only too easy to see why von K—— and his companion had chosen that road with all its possible accidents and were travelling by night."

A little later, this same French paper was to learn from one of its correspondents all the particulars of Marthe's crossing of the Pyrenees some time before, and her romantic arrival at Boulou and Perpignan.

After recalling the substance of the previous article, the editor of this paper went on to say :

" I asked the *Sureté Générale* and the Prefecture of Police what they thought of this affair. The *Sureté Générale* did not make any reply at all. Nevertheless I am informed that the Commissioner of Police at Boulou, where the widow de R—— attracted very much attention

in March, 1917; the manager of the hotel at Boulou; the Central Commissioner at Perpignan, before whom she was taken; and the Special Commissioner at Perpignan, would be in a position to give detailed information concerning this mysterious person. There are, furthermore, certain civilian witnesses, a list of whom is in my possession. Finally, the Cabinet of the Prefect of Police has been good enough to intimate to me that nothing is known about this lady with a taste for travelling.

"The question therefore subsists as I raised it: What were this woman and this Joseph D—— doing, in company with von K——, on the Spanish highroads, on the night of July 7-8 last? It seems to me that an inquiry is necessary, and if I can believe my correspondents, the results will be highly interesting. I shall, as far as I can help the members of the Inquiry Commission.

"This lady, calling herself de R—— or just R——, is a brunette, rather tall, with grey eyes and rather hard features. She is provided with male attire in her trunks. Her furs are magnificent. She reached Madrid, coming from Paris, at the end of June, 1917, and put up at the —— Hotel. Notice was soon taken of her there. The Germans, Han von K——, made a daily visit to her. A few days later, Joseph D—— came upon the scene, calling himself a Russian aviator. These three persons would remain closeted together for hours at a time.

"On the Sunday when the accident occurred, a magnificent automobile, driven by von K——, came to a stop before the hotel, to the astonishment of the people present. All were aware of the functions of the said von K——, so that they were greatly surprised at his intimacy with this Frenchwoman from Blamont and this Russian who wore the *Croix de Guerre*.

"Subsequent to the accident, Madame de R——, as she pretends to be named, had herself conveyed back to the hotel, where she remained completely at rest for some time.

"The Madrid papers evidently complied with orders given to them, by not mentioning this extraordinary affair. But an intelligent and curious-minded Frenchman went to seek information at a reliable source.

"That is how it was learned that, in March, 1917, as I have already said, Madame de R—— came from Spain into France, having crossed the frontier fraudulently by night. She put up at the hotel in Boulou, alleging that she was an aviator. Then she proceeded to Perpignan and telegraphed to the hotel manager at Boulou to send on her luggage and her mail. During her sojourn in

Boulou she telegraphed to a Russian, probably this same D——, as follows : ' Am without news. What must I do ? ' The reply she received was : ' Come.'

" Requested by the Central Commissioner at Perpignan to explain the meaning of all this, and being brought face to face with the hotel manager at Boulou she is stated to have uttered threats, saying that ' if she was not immediately set at liberty she would bring about the intervention of powerful friends.' The Commissioner at Perpignan is alleged to have allowed himself to be intimidated by these threats, so that he set this astonishing person free, though with much reluctance.

" It will be easy for the police to verify the details I have given, because there are numerous witnesses, including the manager of the automobile garage at Perpignan, a linen merchant at Béziers, a retired tax collector in the Aude Department, and an ironmonger at Carcassonne. It seems possible that this dame de R—— usurped her name and her passport and that she was not born in Blamont. It is also possible that Joseph D—— usurped some one else's papers. But what is certain is that these two people lived at Madrid in the intimacy of von K——, that is to say, of the Grand Master of German torpedoing along the Spanish coasts. All this is well worthy of attention."

There were several points which I was never able to clear up, however.

To begin with, even after questioning Marthe and Zozo, I could not discover just how this accident, which very nearly cost them their lives, had occurred.

It certainly could not have been deliberately provoked by either of them, since this would have meant not only exposing themselves as much as the Baron, but running the risk of being killed while he might escape. No sensible secret agent plots on such lines.

Nor do I see why Marthe was in the car, since von Kolberg so greatly wished to avoid her being identified in company with Zozo. Marthe herself must have had a hand in bringing that about.

It will be recalled that, when planning the expedition to the Barcelona aviation meet, Marthe had suggested to me that she might try to deliver into my hands not only the Baron's " toys " but also the Baron in person. Some such idea may also have occurred to Zozo

The Baron had mentioned, when making his final arrangements for the propaganda campaign in France, that he must

change the money with the help of a man he knew, before Zozo could cross the frontier. I should not be surprised, therefore, if Marthe and Zozo had concocted some mad scheme between them, or perhaps they had only intuitively guessed each other's thoughts, for decoying the Baron into France and capturing him there.

Fate defeated them by prompting the Baron to drive the car himself.

He was not particularly good at this, I understand. He had his chauffeur beside him on the driving-seat ; and Marthe has told me that he kept constantly looking over his shoulder into the car, where she and Zozo sat side by side. It is not possible to say whether he felt uneasy, fearing for his safety because they were both behind him, or whether his growing jealousy of this impressive " fiancé " merely prompted him to keep an eye on the pair, so as to know what they were doing. At all events, because of this imprudent and oft-repeated action of his, he did not stand a chance when the other car flashed up behind him.

Another unsolved mystery was the disappearance of this phantom car, whose headlights blinded the Skylark and her companions on the road of the Partridge Pass ; the local authorities at Aravasa were never able to identify it.

I have heard it intimated, since then, that Naval Lieutenant Stinton had organised a net of discreet surveillance around his colleague, von Kolberg, and that he had set an agent on the track of Zozo, whose arrival in Madrid had puzzled him considerably.

It is furthermore alleged that no sooner had the Baron's great German touring-car left Madrid, bearing him with his new agent as well as Marthe towards the frontier, than a big British touring-car belonging to the Intelligence Service set out in pursuit, overtaking it at the Partridge Pass, Lieutenant Stinton's car pressing von Kolberg's so very close that——

Well ! The effect of a sudden light flashed in the eyes of night-birds is well known.

One thing is certain, at all events. When the Baron returned home he discovered that in the confusion of the accident he had lost his bunch of keys. Among them was the key to his safe.

As already stated, a Spanish touring-car had rescued the Baron and his escort from the ditch. At one moment they were all four unconscious, or seemed to be, as they lay stretched out side by side on mattresses. Zozo was conveyed discreetly to a good clinic in Madrid. Marthe was being cared for, not at

the hotel as the Press had reported, but in the Baron's own home.

Meanwhile the published account of the accident was having unexpected reactions in France.

Marthe's father, Adjutant Bettenfeld, or Père Louis, as he was familiarly called, had won his corporal's stripe at the Battle of Reichshoffen,* and he had continued to serve as a non-commissioned officer in the 9th Hussars.

He had been on the retired list for five years when the World War broke out. Immediately asking to re-enlist, this last recompense for his faithful service could not be denied him. The Commander of the Nancy area accordingly put him in charge of a small post for the surveillance of a branch railway.

With exemplary zeal and punctuality, he devoted himself to his new duties.

One single reproach could have been formulated against him. His father had owned a vineyard, and he had learned to love the delightful but treacherous and heady *vin gris* of Lorraine. Having taught twenty successive "classes" of peasant recruits to sit their horses, he was a familiar figure in all the farmhouses of the Nancy region, and at none of them could he resist the glass offered with a good heart by one of his former Hussars.

So that, when he went home at the end of the day, with the *Médaille militaire* proudly displayed on his fine old soldierly chest, he was rarely very steady on his pins.

Perhaps this was one reason why he had never been allowed to know that his daughter had been sent by the General Staff on a mission to Spain.

Marthe's mother knew, however ; she alone of all the family had been told the truth, and she kept it to herself. It was a secret concerning the national defence, and in France women may guard secrets better than men, especially where the men are young and inexperienced like Marthe's brothers, or fond of the Lorraine wine which is apt to loosen the tongue, as was the case with Père Louis.

On rare occasions, when her husband or her sons questioned her as to Marthe's whereabouts and occupations, Madame Bettenfeld replied evasively that Marthe was engaged in aeroplane exhibitions abroad.

At the close of an uneventful day, Père Louis had settled down for a comfortable evening, when raps were showered on the door, and the familiar voice of Adjutant Lemerre called out :

* Famous for the charge of French *cuirassiers*, the Prussians outnumbering the French by 130,000 to 30,000, August 6, 1870.

"Bettenfeld! The Colonel wants you!"

"At eight o'clock? What can it be about?" the old man asked.

As they walked he kept speculating on the possible significance of it all. Both were silent, aware that something extraordinary must have occurred. Could it be the Lorraine *vin gris?* Père Louis wondered. The Colonel might want to give him a paternal lecture.

He and his fellow-adjutant strode swiftly towards the quarters. They had come as they stood in the *sabots* they wore for stable duty—the usual slippers of French cavalrymen at rest. In the clear August sky strange glows and flashes were visible, coming from the rockets sent up at the slightest alarm by the anti-aircraft stations. But even the practised eyes of these men could scarcely distinguish, far up in the heavens, the shooting-stars proper to the season.

Suddenly a new idea occurred to Bettenfeld. He grasped Adjutant Lemerre by the arm.

"I've got it! I know!" he exclaimed. "It's because of the guard duty, day before yesterday, when Sergeant X—— came to relieve me. You remember? That idiot who was sent here from the front, a few days ago. I told him to make frequent patrols over towards the Vongeville Ravine, which leads to the only point where the line could be blown up. As I saw he wasn't listening, I repeated the passwords once more. He answered insolently:

"'The password is *snore*! You've drunk your fill to-night, Père Louis. Now go to bed.'

"Then I flew off the handle, and I called him a filthy *embusqué*."*

"Come along," Lemerre answered. "If that's all, it will soon be settled."

A few moments later Marthe Richard's father, Adjutant Bettenfeld, stood at attention before the Colonel.

"You are Adjutant Bettenfeld?" the commanding officer inquired. "Have you any children?"

"Five, sir," the N.C.O. answered. "Three sons, all wounded at the front, and two daughters, one married to the foreman of a factory in Rouen, and the other the widow of a motor-truck driver killed at the front last year."

"What is the name of the last one?"

"Marthe. She's the eldest."

"Where is she at present?"

"In Spain, I believe."

* Slacker.

"Is she very well off, since she can travel so much in war-time?"

"Her husband was rich. At all events, since his death she has seen to it that we lack nothing."

"Oh! So she sends money to you sometimes?"

"Once in a while, sir. My sons are all wounded, they are generally in hospital or on sick leave. My wife can't do much work any more. We have only my pay to live on, and that's little enough for the five of us."

"How long is it since you last had news of Marthe?"

"Last month, I think. She even sent us a little money order—from Madrid."

"Was it French money?"

"I really don't know, sir. My wife went to cash it. It wasn't far under five hundred francs. I believe it was Spanish money."

"But surely not German money, Père Louis?" asked the Colonel anxiously, his long moustache quivering as he spoke.

"German money?" cried out the old soldier.

He stood more stiffly than ever, as if he feared to lose his self-control, as he continued:

"Marthe, my child, receiving German money? We have never eaten that bread, sir, and if I knew——"

"Pull yourself together, Bettenfeld," the Colonel said. "Remember that you are a soldier, and the soldier must come before the father to-day. Have courage, and read this. There may not be a word of truth in it. But it was necessary that you should be the first to know."

The Colonel held out to the old adjutant a copy of the paper I have already quoted, relating the interrupted motor-car adventure of Marthe Richard with the Baron von Kolberg.

Père Louis read with difficulty, for his eyes were dimmed by tears. When he had finished, he broke down completely. Tearing his cap off his head, he started slapping his thigh with it, sobbing between the oaths he rumbled out.

"If the paper has told the truth and my daughter did that," he choked, "I shall kill her with my own hands!"

"Calm yourself, Père Louis," the Colonel said, rising. "There may be some misunderstanding. I shall write to-morrow to inquire of the General Staff. They will know the truth there. Go home, and show you are a man by holding your tongue, so that your wife may not hear of this yet."

"My wife would die of the shock," he groaned. "Marthe was her favourite child. And to think that for the sake of money——"

He broke off, and continued :

" No, sir, it isn't possible ! Marthe was rather stubborn ; at times she wouldn't listen to anybody. But I'd stake my own head that my daughter is not guilty."

" When were you to go on duty again, Bettenfeld ? " the Colonel asked suddenly.

" To-morrow at 5 a.m."

" Well ! You are to remain at home. Lemerre ! To-morrow you will send some one to take Bettenfeld's place at his post.

" You're afraid, sir, that there may be two traitors in the family ? " Père Louis demanded fiercely, rising to his full height.

" No, Bettenfeld," the Colonel answered with great kindness. " But the paper I have just shown you will be read over all Nancy to-morrow. I don't wish anybody to be in a position to speak ill of you while you are on duty. Now give me your hand to shake, *mon brave,* and remember that whatever may happen, neither your officers nor your comrades will forget you."

Père Louis stumbled homeward through the night.

Marthe's mother, meanwhile, sat wondering what that singular summons from the Colonel could have meant. Bettenfeld had been gone very long.

" Provided only that nothing has happened to Marthe ! " she kept repeating.

When her husband returned at last he collapsed on the edge of the bed. Accustomed as she was to reading his thoughts, Madame Bettenfeld knew before he could speak that something was wrong with Marthe.

He tried to deceive her.

" It's as I expected," he said. " I'm punished for telling that young sergeant, day before yesterday, that he was an *embusqué.* He has filed a complaint against me, and the Colonel has put me under arrest for a week."

" Well, you'd better be getting to bed, because you must be up early to go on duty," Madame Bettenfeld said, still puzzled and worried.

" No," he answered. " I am to stay at home."

" Being under arrest doesn't interfere with your military duties," the old woman objected, for a lifetime of experience had made her familiar with military regulations.

Bettenfeld, who saw that he was caught in his own subterfuge, tried to defend his position by saying lamely :

" I can't help it, the Colonel told me I must keep to the house."

"Perhaps he has some more bad news to give you," Madame Bettenfeld suggested.

"Perhaps. Anyhow I can't say anything."

"Not even to me?"

"Especially not to you."

"Marthe is ill—or injured!" the mother cried out. "You have already spoken too much, you must go on, now."

"Well, yes! Marthe is ill."

"A fall?"

"Yes."

"Serious?"

Bettenfeld did not answer, and his wife burst out:

"Will you speak? You must see you are driving me crazy! Surely my Marthe can't be dead?"

"It would be a thousand times better if our daughter were dead!" the old man groaned. "You would have the truth, and so I'll tell you. Marthe, our daughter, is a spy. The money she sends us—the money you went to collect at the post office, only last month—is German money. Do you understand, now? We are the parents of a spy!"

"The Colonel said that?" Marthe's mother demanded, up in arms at once.

"He showed me the newspaper in which it was printed."

"And you believed it? You are both fools, and good for nothing! Our child a spy? Don't you know, then, that it's for our own country she is working?"

The mother had no sooner let out the words than she realised that Marthe might run an even greater danger if she revealed to her husband, at this moment of all others, the fact that Marthe as a double-agent had entered the service of Germany in the interest of France. He would not be able to understand, he would see in it only full confirmation of his worst fears.

Madame Bettenfeld tried to retrieve herself.

"How can I tell what it means—with this accursed war?" she sobbed. "But for all we know, it may be for our country she is working!"

Her husband, who had collapsed on the bed close beside her, was forgotten. Presently the shrill call of the sirens rang out for the extinction of all lights in the town, rousing the echoes in the quiet streets, but she did not hear it.

She was roused roughly from her half-dream.

Surely she must be mistaken. But no, there it came again: the sound of many feet, and voices shouting in chorus. It was some moments before she could realise what was being

said, or that it had any connection with her familiar lamp. Only when there came to be so many feet, and the voices grew so shrill, that the ground itself seemed to shake and the air to throb, did she hear clearly and understand the howl of the threatening rabble :

"Put out that light, you spies ! "

She obeyed with trembling hands, and felt her way to bed in the dark.

After a considerable while the crowd dispersed, allowing peace to return to the usually quiet street, though not to the home of the Bettenfelds.

Next day Marthe's mother came very near keeping Père Louis company as if she, too, had been under arrest, for she lacked the courage to go out. But there were necessary purchases of food to be made, and she had nobody she could send to market.

Furthermore, she wished to dispatch a letter to Marthe, who alone, it would seem, could rescue them from their wellnigh desperate position.

She wrote frankly and fully, telling what had happened, and imploring Marthe to come home and prove that all was well, or in any case to see that the truth was made known. She counted up the number of days which would be needed for her letter to reach Madrid, and for Marthe to rush back —or else to see that something was done without loss of time.

Having posted the letter with her own hands, Madame Bettenfeld hurried to market, so as to get the experience over quickly. At first she found little difference in the attitude of people, and she almost felt relief, wondering if by miracle the whole horrible business could have blown over.

Soon she knew better, however. Some one approached, saying aloud to a friend :

"Don't you know her ? She's the mother of the spy ! "

She saw men and women turn round and shrink away. Then she understood : the news had begun to spread through the town.

When she returned towards her own house, she perceived that everybody in her own neighbourhood had already heard. As much would be true of all Nancy by evening.

That night, again, there was a gathering at the door, a stone or two were thrown, and there were shouts to extinguish the light. She passed between the lamp and a window ; as the dim ray flickered for an instant, there were howls that she had signalled by flashing lights. More stones were showered ; and again she and old Père Louis sought refuge in darkness.

Next day she did not venture out; enough scraps of food remained to make such meals as the aged people had the courage to eat in their distress.

The day after, she had no choice but to return to market.

There could be no mistake now: the whole town knew. Whatever the direction in which she went, people made way for her, avoiding her proximity as if she had been a leper. Friends whom she crossed turned their heads to the other side, pretending not to see her.

"That's the mother of the spy!" a number of people said to their companions, speaking so loudly that she must hear.

One person, whom she had known slightly, harangued her:

"So now we know why the spy's father chose a post as watchman along the railroad. It was in order to let his friends from Germany pass freely! He's been removed none too soon, and put where he can do no harm!"

She reached the market more dead than alive. The vendors insulted her and refused to sell her the vegetables for which she asked. At the baker's shop, filled with sweet-smelling fresh loaves, she was rudely informed that the entire supply was sold out for the day.

On her way home a procession of children formed behind her, jeering and flinging mud and shouting in parrot-voices:

"Spy! Spy!"

Stones were showered as she reached the house. She closed the shutters, and did not open them again.

The fight was ended as far as she was concerned. Her husband and she agreed that it was best for them to die. Indeed, scarcely a scrap of food remained, and since they could secure no more, starvation faced them.

But still she kept Marthe's secret, even from the aged and broken-hearted father who would be unable to understand.

Meanwhile, Colonel de R——, commandant of the Nancy area, had kept the promise made to Adjutant Bettenfeld. He had sent to us in Paris a report requesting information about Marthe Richard, and also instructions concerning the attitude to be adopted towards her parents.

I had already left the Counter-Espionage Service for the Intelligence Service, and the reply was drafted by my successor, Lefenestre. He did all that could be done in this particularly delicate case.

There could be no question of announcing through the Press that Marthe was really in our service. It was furthermore unadvisable to acquaint even the military authorities

in Nancy with the facts. Luckily we realised this in Paris at the time, though we did not yet know how serious the situation had become in Nancy. We learned only later that public feeling had been worked up to such a pitch that if we had made the facts known even to the authorities, they might have seen no alternative but to reveal them. To their eyes, such action alone might have seemed sufficient to clear from suspicion Marthe's aged parents, and thereby perhaps save their lives if only by averting the starvation which would have been a form of suicide.

The solution found by us consisted in sending a Staff Officer on a mission to arrange matters amicably.

Captain A—— drove up to the door which had been pointed out to him. He found a huge crowd pressing against the fence and held back with difficulty by the non-commissioned officer whom Colonel de R—— had been compelled to station there.

During the night some neighbours had written in letters of tar across the neat white front of the house, "The Home of the Spies." Every once in a while a shower of stones, accompanied by gross insults, would strike the inscription or else the closed door and shutters.

The appearance of a Staff Captain in uniform, seated in a military car, created a sensation. A shout went up from the crowd :

"They are going to be arrested at last!"

Captain A—— sprang out and went up to the most enthusiastic shouters.

"Arrest whom?" he demanded sharply. "The braying asses who have come here, without any good reason, to insult these worthy people?"

A frozen silence fell on the throng. The officer continued impressively :

"I am sent by the Chief of Staff to congratulate Père Bettenfeld on the conduct of his daughter. She has been wounded at the front as a nurse, and has just been evacuated to a foreign hospital in Paris. Another nurse, a Russian, stole her papers in order to get to Spain. It is about this other woman, who is certainly a spy, that the papers spoke some days ago. But that has nothing to do with the Bettenfeld family."

The officer turned to the N.C.O. on duty before the house.

"Send Adjutant Bettenfeld to me," he ordered.

The old man came slowly out into the court. He was more bent under the weight of the four days which had just passed, than under the thirty years of his military life.

On her way home a procession of children formed behind her, jeering and flinging mud and shouting in parrot-voices:
"Spy! Spy!"

"Bettenfeld," said the captain, "I have come to tell you, on behalf of the Chief of Staff, that your daughter is to be given the *Croix de Guerre* for the services she has rendered at the front. You may well be proud of your child, and carry your head more erect than ever as you wear the *Médaille militaire* pinned to your Hussar's uniform."

As he spoke he threw his arm round the old man's shoulders, in full view of the amazed populace who no longer knew which way to look.

The door of the Bettenfeld house opened slowly, and a woman in deep mourning came gravely out. There was not a tear on the mother's cheeks, as she stood silently on the threshold which she had not even tried to protect against popular maledictions by telling the truth which she knew, but which she guarded as her daughter's secret.

Even at this moment she did not utter a word of reproach against those who had wantonly insulted her. She had remained a true French mother, worthy of the Skylark; she had made of her silent grief a shield to protect her young, as the mother-bird may feign a broken wing, offering her body as a decoy to draw the hunter away from the nest.

Now, at last, the crowd understood, while the Staff Officer gave a military salute to the old Lorraine peasant woman who had dauntlessly given four combatants to the cause of France: three sons, all of whom had been mutilated at the front, and her daughter, Marthe Richard—the Spy.

DEATH OR —

By
MAX WILD

As the author, a German, had lived in Russia and Poland before the war, he was attached to the Eighth Army Headquarters, where he served first in East Prussia and in Poland as Operations Orderly Officer at Headquarters. This brought him into contact with Generals Hindenburgh and Ludendorff and other important members of the German Forces.

To those of the uninitiated who have ever set foot inside the sanctuary of Army Headquarters, the number-plates on certain doors, such as IA, IB, or even IIIB Intelligence Officer, will convey little meaning. It needs some experience of the place to make one realise that strange and secret dramas of all kinds are enacted behind the door of IIIB—sinister dramas, too, that make men hurry past this door. For as a rule no soldier likes to linger outside a place from which there seems to emanate a perpetual odour of prison and the firing-squad. For the most part soldiers have only a very hazy impression of the " dreadfully intriguing " business which has to be transacted within these four walls—of espionage and counter-espionage, of the hunt for information behind the lines, and of all the secret doings that let loose the streams of gold, and are haunted on all sides by the spectre of death.

I myself had, up to the present, been concerned only with IA, the Operations Department, the birthplace of all plans of action. All the same I must confess that the Intelligence Department had a burning attraction for me. I pictured it as the setting of the tensest criminal romances of the war. At that time I had never set eyes on a spy, except for a poor wretch who had been put up against the wall during the fight round the blazing manor of the Walewskis. Once in Lodz I should have been present at the execution of a woman spy who had been left behind by the well-known Intelligence Officer, Colonel Terechow, after the retreat of the Russians. She had done us a great deal of harm, but had finally been betrayed and captured. I saw the girl for a few moments as, with seeming indifference, she was being led off to her execution, but I could not bring myself to witness her end.

I was appointed Intelligence Officer in the front lines. That meant that I remained in perpetual contact with my division, but received orders only from Headquarters. My duties were to undertake the rapid transmission of information: to engage in espionage and, of course, the frustration of enemy espionage as well.

The perfect Intelligence Officer in the front lines should combine in his own person a diversity of qualities such as few even of Nature's favourites possess. He should be a first-rate soldier, a profound psychologist, a constructive criminologist, a hunter of unerring instinct, and a man of absolute discretion in any company, who knows how to act with care and forethought. On the Russian front, too, he must be able to swim, climb, be inured to prolonged marches, and drive a car with skill. In other respects he has an exceptional amount of liberty for a soldier, and is not bound down to time and place; he is, in fact, a vagrant eavesdropper of the front, a modern wild man of the woods. It is assumed that not a single thing escapes him of what is taking place on the opposite side of the lines, and that he can forecast the enemy's plans from the reports that filter in.

At the front the Intelligence Officer in constant association with Headquarters was regarded above all as one who had detailed information of the most private plans of the commander-in-chief. I was sometimes hard put to it when I was expected in absolute confidence to divulge things about which I knew nothing whatever. On the other hand I was grateful for the strictness of the rule of secrecy imposed upon me. It was a permanent protection against the curiosity even of important personages. It was only by slow degrees that my position at the front became understood, but then I gained the fullest support from all in carrying out my duties.

In the front lines of our army were many sites which could have served admirably for the erection of an intelligence station, but none seemed as suitable as the little town of Gombin, lying near the Vistula. Spreading forests surrounded this spot and extended right down to the river. Owing to the scarcity of troops the banks of the Vistula were guarded at that place only by a light cavalry detachment. There were no trenches here, no connected outposts. The opposite bank was guarded by Cossacks who rode up and down the embankment as unperturbed as our own dragoons. It was an ideal situation for enemy espionage. They could send their agents here at any time of the night without much trouble, transport them across the river, and leave them to take cover in the vast forest. I did not believe the Russian espionage service

could fail to take advantage of such favourable conditions. We knew that they had, during their retreat, left a large number of spies behind them in the territory now occupied by us, and these would have to transmit their messages to the Intelligence Officer at Warsaw by the quickest possible route, if they were to be of any value. Since it was impossible to slip through our lines, the Vistula was the only alternative route. Boats could creep up to the thick reeds by the bank during the night, to pick people up or set them down, and the stream could easily be crossed by a good swimmer.

The Russian Intelligence Officer must at that time—the spring of 1915—have been in something of a fix. Hindenburg had attacked from the north near Prasnitz, and, even apart from that, everything pointed to the surrounding of that largest of Russian fortresses, Nowogeorgiewsk, in the near future. It would be of supreme importance to the Russian staff to lift the veil which hid the German plans of attack. One could assume therefore that there would be a concerted effort of the Russian Intelligence Service by the Vistula. As a complete novice in my department I was not yet able to draw the right conclusions from the situation. Otherwise I should have been bound to keep watch by the Vistula day and night.

II

IT was pure chance—a dog and a wounded deer—that brought me at last upon the right track. For days on end I had wandered about on the banks of the Vistula with my dog Hector in search of some clue, but nothing turned up. Then it occurred to me that I might with luck come upon a meeting-place of the Russian agents in the large forests that lay further back, from which they might disperse into the country beyond. The woods lent themselves admirably to such a purpose.

There was nothing to be found. The forests of fir and young oak were so dense that it was impossible to see even a short way ahead. Nothing but a systematic search could yield results. I conducted a regular beat with the assistance of three officers and seventy men from the neighbourhood. Human beings were to be taken prisoner, deer to be shot. Result : three bucks ! But one of the bucks was wounded, so Hector had to be sent after him and was put on the scent. After a few minutes he stopped short and gave tongue. I hurried to the place from which the barking came.

"At him, Hector, at him!" But to my amazement the dog only barked more furiously. On approaching I found not a buck, but two men defending themselves against the dog's fierce attacks.

"What are you doing there?"

"We are fugitives, trying to escape the Russian military service."

As a precaution I had them led away handcuffed. At Gombin they were interrogated. They were both Poles, and gave their names, ages and addresses. They insisted that they had fled from the Russians so as not to have to fight against the Germans, who had done them no harm. They said at first that their homes were in the same place; but when they were questioned separately I noticed that they named different places. A careful search of their clothes revealed nothing suspicious. This was a disappointment. In the end shirts and underclothes were examined again, and ripped open seam by seam. And there a thin wisp of paper, tightly rolled, came to light in the waistband of a pair of drawers.

The minute writing could only be deciphered with the aid of a magnifying-glass. I was overwhelmed with excitement. At last I had made it out:

> "Meet agent 17—fetch him Saturday night—appointed place."

"So you are spies? Agents!"

Both men behaved as if they knew nothing about it, and pretended they had found the pair of drawers on their way. Whatever line I tried, they stuck to their story. After ten hours' questioning, towards four o'clock in the morning, I at last resorted to a final method. I had been told to be as ruthless as was necessary.

"Either you confess—or I put a bullet through your brains!" And I loaded my revolver ostentatiously. "You can have five minutes to think it over, and not a second longer." I stood in front of them with the revolver in one hand and my watch in the other.

"One minute more!" Slowly I lifted the weapon and aimed straight between the eyes of one of them. He shuddered, grew pale, and blurted out:

"I'll tell you everything, sir."

"And you?"

"I will, too," stammered the other.

"Good, let the men have some tea and bread," I said to my interpreter, "to give them a bit of strength." I gave

them cigarettes too, and then they began their story. They were both agents sent out by the Intelligence Officer in Warsaw to spy out the land round about the Vistula, my province more or less. They had to give in their reports to the chief agent.

"And who is he, this chief agent?"

"It is a woman, whose mother owns a farm quite near to Gombin. She works in association with her future husband."

"Who gives you food and lodging?" They told me that too. I learnt also that they had already crossed over three times. This was enough for the moment, for I had more important work to do now. Towards evening the two spies were put into German uniform and made to accompany us to the farm. To prevent any one from escaping, the whole property was surrounded with cavalry.

The mother received me in the friendliest fashion. When I asked her about her daughter Manja she told me she had been in Warsaw for a long time. I gave the sign, and my people began to search. Manja was easily found, hiding in a wardrobe. Immediately after, they brought her fiancé along too, whom they had dragged out from under a heap of rubbish on the floor. The three were taken away separately. A watch was set over the farm in case any one else should turn up there.

I questioned the young man first.

"Lies won't help you. These men here have told us everything!" And I had the two men who had been in the oak wood brought in. He stared at them stupidly, turned deathly pale, swayed and fell to the ground. The man was a miserable coward and a blackguard too, for he not only gave away all his associates before a single question was put to him, but even brought accusations against the girl he was to marry. I had him taken away.

It was the women's turn next. Nothing could be got out of the girl. She sat on her chair crying, huddled in her shawl, and kept on saying "No." She had never had anything to do with espionage, and her fiancé was completely innocent too. He had done nothing but flee from the Russians to save himself from having to fight.

"The only part of your story that I believe, Fräulein Manja," I said, "is that your fiancé sneaked away from military service, because he is a coward. You might as well know that I have proofs of your guilt, and that it will cost you your life if you lie any more. But if you tell me everything you will make it possible for me to save you from the

death penalty. I can only help you if you help me to put down the Russian spy system in these parts. You have no choice."

"I know nothing about it," she replied in a whisper. Her mother, who had been listening to everything, burst into tears and incoherent babbling. Then both mother and daughter fell into one another's arms and sobbed aloud.

I saw that it was not so easy to play the part of a cold, heartless criminologist; but I knew that here was an opportunity at last of disclosing the tortuous ways of the Russian secret service. Cost what it might, I had to make Manja speak. She was evidently holding her tongue principally to avoid incriminating her betrothed. His evidence was bound to open her eyes.

"Now listen attentively, Fräulein Manja, while I read your fiancé's deposition to you."

I took up the paper and read:

"Fräulein Manja K. has been working for the Russian Intelligence Department for some months. It was she who induced me to engage in the same work. I only became engaged to her for the sake of pecuniary advantage."

Eagerly I watched the effect of this dastardly statement on the girl. Manja sat speechless for a little while. I saw she was making a superhuman effort to control herself. Suddenly she sprang to her feet in a rage and screamed:

"It isn't true! He can't have said that! Brute! Traitor! . . . Oh, God! . . ."

Then with a hysterical laugh:

"You are only trying to frighten me . . . of course . . . I'm really so upset. . . ."

"It's no use being upset, Fräulein Manja. You don't believe me, and you think I want to deceive you. Well, you shall hear it from his own lips."

I had her and her mother taken into the next room, and her fiancé brought in again.

"I have to question you once more about what you told me before. Will you repeat everything you know about your fiancée."

He told his tale without hesitation, and this time he added to the story, making out that Manja had been the mistress of a Russian officer who had to spend some time in the neighbourhood.

He got no further. The girl rushed past me and sprang at him.

"You contemptible brute, you coward!" she shrieked, and beat the traitor's face with her fists. I oughtn't to have

allowed it, but I let her wreak her fury on him. He never attempted to defend himself.

"Now you've got what you deserve, you beast! Now I feel a bit better!" She spat on the ground in front of him and sat down again on her chair. The man was taken away.

"Are you convinced now, Fräulein Manja?"

She made no reply, but sat there tearless, motionless, without a sound, as if turned to stone. And now for the first time her mother began to speak, gazing anxiously at her daughter.

"Oh, sir," she sobbed," you won't really shoot my daughter if she . . ."

"Sh! Mother, be quiet! What are you talking about? They can't shoot me . . . no, they can't!" Now she began to cry again, wrung her hands and marched up and down the room. "They don't shoot women!"

I immediately sent for the report of the execution of Colonel Terechow's woman spy, and read it to her.

"You must come to your senses now and only think of yourself if you want to save your life. The evidence against you is overwhelming. There is no point in lying."

"So I'm going to be shot?"

I hesitated a moment, then answered gravely, "Yes, you will be shot."

She flung herself upon her mother's neck sobbing. I gave a sign to my secretary, and we left the two women to themselves. After a time I had tea brought, the curtains were drawn back and the oil lamps extinguished. It was broad daylight, and it showed up the worn faces of the two women, who still clung to one another.

Manja's resistance was broken. She began to tell her tale. She disclosed all her secrets without reserve, as if in reaction from the persistent silence she had maintained hitherto. She told all about her fiancé mercilessly, how it was he who had drawn her into this perilous business, how he had always kept in the background and let her perform the most dangerous tasks. With a little encouragement from me she went further still, gave the names of her associates, and did not spare even herself in the least, until she had told me everything.

The most important piece of news for me concerned the arrival of the elderly spy, Mazur, a particularly dangerous man, who was due to cross the Vistula on Wednesday of the following week. She thought I should be able to learn more from him than from all the rest put together. That ended Manja's cross-questioning as far as I was concerned.

She and her comrades were taken to the court-matrial, and her mother was allowed to return to her farm. She was happy to learn that her daughter had only been sentenced to a period of imprisonment. I had a hard struggle for the lives of the two spies found in the oak wood. It was with difficulty that I saved them from being shot. But I felt it my duty to reward them for the invaluable service they had rendered. And in any case fifteen years' imprisonment was no trifling punishment. The scoundrelly fiancé met with the fate he deserved.

My path now lay clear before me. The cries of the first victims rang in my ears, and kept me from observing strictly the letter of the law if any circumstance made a milder sentence possible. The work of an Intelligence Officer in war-time often requires a hardened heart, and so I have been all the more gratified if later on I have been able to save the life of a good many who had taken the wrong path.

III

You can understand how restlessly I looked forward to the day on which the first of the spies I had been told about was to come over. As darkness fell I crept out with my men to the bank of the Vistula. The extensive sandbanks could be seen rising out of the water. The current flowed strongly past the opposite bank, while on our side the dark, shallow water ebbed sluggishly along, to lose itself in the dense masses of reeds. So still was the wind that any sound, any stroke of an oar could be clearly heard.

About midnight we heard the creak of a boat being run aground on the sand. There was a rustling in the rushes, and a man forced his way through the undergrowth. Then he tripped over a wire stretched tight across the path, a blanket was flung over his head, there was a slight choking sound, and the gag was firm in his mouth and his hands were tied.

Not far from the bank the boat rocked, waiting to pick the man up again in case of danger. The boatman paused for a moment or two, then went back reassured to the other bank.

The examination of this agent brought out some valuable information about the movements of troops towards the north, and above all confirmed the approach of the spy Mazur, of whom even Manja had spoken with such respect. You may imagine that I was eager to make his acquaintance.

Rain fell in torrents on the night on which I was hoping to cut the claws of the mysterious Herr Mazur and the other

six spies of whom I had been told. As a result of all my reconnaissances I was familiar with every tree and shrub, and so the placing of my pickets offered no difficulties even on a night like this. Long before midnight we lay in our places, drenched to the skin with the pouring rain. According to the agent's statement a signal-light was to flash out in the mill on the opposite bank of the river after one o'clock, which would have to be answered from this side, as a sign that the coast was clear.

Towards midnight the rain had become a little less heavy. I stood close by the river-edge, and at the appointed time I saw a glimmer of light opposite. I snapped on my torch at once, and we waited eagerly.

This time I had posted no less than twenty men in the narrow passage, and once again stretched a wire across the path, a trick in the spying game which I had discovered myself. Hector, too, whom I had left behind because of the bad weather, had found his way here all by himself and was suddenly lying by my side. I pressed his damp muzzle into the grass and whispered softly to him : " Quiet, Hector, quiet ! " Suddenly he raised his head and pricked his ears in the direction of the river. A prearranged signal was passed along.

A slight rustling came from the reeds, and some one breathed heavily as he climbed up the bank. We heard footsteps creeping warily along, and six figures appeared one after another. As soon as the one in front touched the wire we all jumped up, and twenty pairs of arms grabbed at the dim figures.

Two of them fought desperately. A woman began to cry out, and Hector barked furiously. One of them nearly gave us the slip by throwing himself on the ground and trying to crawl between our legs. But Hector had got a firm hold of him from behind and refused to let go. My party were in the highest spirits over the success of our spy-hunt and made the time pass quickly on our return to Gombin with all kinds of crude jests. The prisoners were all quiet, except for one who cursed and scolded without stopping.

" Damn that brute, that devil ! "

He seemed not to be able to hold his tongue.

" Whom have you got such a grudge against ? " I asked him at last.

" I know what I'm in for. But it's all the fault of that stupid officer who sent me here." He shrugged his shoulders and added, " But what can you expect from such a God-forsaken Russian ! "

Not until we reached Gombin could we distinguish their faces. The woman gave the worst impression of the lot. She was a typical woman of the streets, of the lowest order, with evil, crafty eyes. The men were all about thirty years of age, except one who was older. Each was led into a separate cell, and had to take off his clothes and put on a blanket.

Papers were found on only two of them. There was nothing more except a swarm of vermin. The searching of the female prisoner was entrusted to an elderly woman. This prisoner too had nothing on her but a few small eikons. Her examination came first.

Hedwig, as she called herself, came from Warsaw. She said it was pure chance that she had joined this river-party to which she had been invited. No one had told her where they were going. She said all this with absolute seriousness.

" You are a poor liar," I said. " Mazur has told me that you have been an agent for a long time."

" What's that ? Did the old beast tell you that ? He'd better look out, or I might have something to say that would finish him all right."

" Ask him yourself if you don't believe me." What mattered to me most was to know which of the five was the spy Mazur, so that I could address him straight away by the right name.

The woman took a step towards the oldest prisoner, but I did not let her speak to him but had her taken away at once. The man she had identified sat on the edge of a bed smoking a cigarette, as if it had nothing to do with him. I envied him his nerve. All the same I put a second man to guard him. Then I turned to Hedwig.

" So you're only a *cocotte* on a journey ? Don't you know that it's a dangerous profession so close to the frontier ? One day you may wake up to find yourself in the arms not of a lover but of Death."

" As sure as I love the Lord, I'm telling the truth ! "

" You'll be struck by lightning for this blasphemy," I exclaimed, referring to an Polish saying. And I picked up one of the eikons that had been found on her. She kept on looking at this image with an agonised expression for which I could not account.

IV

As there was nothing to be got out of her just yet, I tried my luck with the man who had called down such murderous curses on the Russian Intelligence Officer. He was called Golba, though his real name was Koslowski. Even now he had not succeeded in calming himself.

"Sir," he said, "there is no point in lying. This Schuschkin, this idiot of a Russian, is to blame for everything. He can't find enough people to send all together on the same errand. And so, of course, there is always a traitor among them." Then he continued his story : "I am an agent of the Intelligence Department in Warsaw. I was to receive my instructions only when I got here from an agent Mazur, whom I have not yet seen. I have never worked with him before. On my way back I was to try to reach Plozk."

"Have you got some one there in whose house you can hide ? What is his name ?"

"That I can't tell you. I am not going to give any one away."

"And if I compel you to speak ?"

"Even so you won't learn anything. You can't do more than shoot me."

"And supposing I torture you until you lose all hope of heaven ?"

"You won't do that. Good God, I can't turn traitor."

"Not even if I spare your life ?"

"Not even then." He drooped his head despairingly. He clearly took my words for a ruse.

"Is there anything you wish for ?"

"Yes. I had two thousand roubles left. I should like these to be sent to my wife, so that she and the children shall have something to live on for the time being."

"What is your wife's address ?"

For a moment he looked at me keenly ; then he told me.

"I should like to ask you one more question. Why did you become a spy ?"

"Because I had no other choice. I was a bandmaster and did not want to be a soldier. They were going to condemn me to death as a deserter and only left me this way of saving myself : death or spying !"

"Would you like to see your family again ?"

"I shall be grateful to you for ever, sir." Then he smiled a little. "Not for ever, of course, but at least for the few hours of life that remain to me."

"I ask you once more, what would you do for me if I spare your life?"

The great fellow fell on his knees sobbing.

"I would do anything for you, sir, only I can't give away my companions." I told them to take him away.

"Wait, one thing more. Have you any other document on you that we haven't yet found?"

He drew a thin roll of brown paper from out of his bushy, black hair and laid it on the table.

"It is only my itinerary. The numbers beside the names of towns correspond with the numbers of the agents, but I don't know who they are." Of his fellow-prisoners too he refused to give the names.

As he was taken away I resolved, if possible, to use this man for my own ends. We already had a security from him, in that his family, to which he seemed very much attached, lived in the territory occupied by us. But I still had to choose a terrible means of binding him to me. I resolved to have him condemned by court martial, which meant death at the hands of the firing-squad. Then he would have me to thank for saving his life. It would not be easy to find another man so staunch in his refusal to turn traitor. He must become my own spy. His family was ordered by telegraph to come to Gombin.

The next three whom I examined were criminals of the lowest kind, who tried most callously to damage one another. Each hoped by putting the blame on another to improve his own lot, and by the end I had seen painted a dismal picture of that dreadful body-snatching which goes on behind the lines. All three of them had, together with the harlot Hedwig, whose real name was Antoscha, hunted down stray German soldiers in East Prussia, and had murdered and robbed them in order to obtain documents and papers.

"Were you wretched folk ordered to commit murder by the Russian Intelligence Officer?"

"No, sir, but we had to do it for our own safety."

"Why do you tell me all this, you contemptible creature?"

"I'm telling you so as to get my own back. I've always been cheated of my reward by the others."

Hedwig-Antoscha was called in again. The she-devil was still smiling.

"You're a spy, a murderess!" I told her. In my excitement I struck the table violently with my hand, in which I was holding one of the eikons. The eikon broke, revealing a small slip of white paper. It was the same with the other

images when I examined them. Closely-written instructions to the spy Antoscha. Places were named, and against them there were numbers and dates.

For the moment little could be derived from their contents. But what mattered was that this Antoscha was obviously an agent of long standing and was likely to know a good deal. The men were remarkably silent in the presence of their accomplice, who sat there with an impatient look. I had her removed.

Antoscha fought with amazing energy for her life, although she knew that she had already given herself away through her acquaintance with Mazur and the instructions in the eikons. Finally even her powerful will was broken. She gave the explanations of the mysterious signs and letters and so enabled me to find even more members of the already partially disorganised spy system in our rear.

It made me recognise with horror the extent of the Russian espionage. If this little sector alone produced such a crowd of emissaries and murderous saboteurs, what must it be like along the whole length of the front if all the Russian Intelligence Officers worked in the same way? We on our side had from the very beginning taken things much too lightly. The principal need seemed to be for human bloodhounds who would be in constant touch with the Russian Intelligence Service and inform us at the right time about its purposes. Such people could come our way only by chance. For I did not know the people who had in the past been sent to me and had been conveyed by me across the Vistula, and I have never seen them again. Probably they were agents who had only offered their services in order to be able to return in safety to the Russians. So it was chance, often the best of helpers, that was shortly to bring me once again to the desired goal.

V

I HAD the prisoner Mazur brought in.

He entered, wrapped up in his blanket like an ancient Roman in his toga, bowed low and smiled politely. I looked at him for some time. I couldn't help liking the man. He had a sympathetic face, and his finely-chiselled features revealed a keen intellect. In contrast with all the others, this was a gentleman, and I addressed him as such.

"Sit down, sir. Will you give me particulars about yourself?"

"Sami Rubinstein, forty years old, Jew, born in Moscow, tradesman. I am glad to be on the German side and so to have escaped the Russian trenches." I had to laugh at the barefaced lies which he brought out with such captivating friendliness. He was not troubled by this, but smiled himself as if it was a good joke, and continued:

"I had to spend a lot of money before I got the credentials from the Intelligence Officer in Warsaw to enable me to come over here as his agent. That was what I had been advised to do, it was the only way. Now I suppose you will have to pack me off into a prison camp?"

"I am sorry, Herr Rubinstein, but I am afraid it won't be as quick as all that. You see, I am very curious to know how you succeeded in bribing the Intelligence Officer. There are a few people over there among the Russians whom I should very much like to see here, particularly Herr Mazur for whom we have been waiting for a long time. A girl called Manja has told us about him."

Rubinstein's face did not change at all.

"Excuse me, sir, but I don't know a soul in Warsaw."

Up to the present we had spoken Polish. When for a moment I couldn't find the right expression, he asked obligingly if we should speak some other language. English perhaps, or French, or Spanish? Or, of course, Russian, or German?

"Let's stick to Polish. You have such an excellent Polish accent that I shall be glad to learn from you. I should never have taken you for a Russian, but rather for a Pole."

He grew a shade more serious.

"Well now, do you by any chance know the spy Mazur?"

"I am afraid I can't be of any help to you. Won't you please look at my pass, with my photograph and the Moscow stamp?"

"You know, Herr Mazur—forgive me, Rubinstein—you can get stacks of passes like that from us here. We can turn out any kind of pass you like, beautifully made, with any kind of stamp, as genuine as you could wish. And in these things the Russians far surpass us. So a sight means nothing at all. Apart from that, your pass has a slight mistake which must have escaped your notice."

"And might I ask what?"

"It has . . . but I won't tell tales out of school. Perhaps I'll explain it sometime later, quite briefly, just before you are shot. That doesn't mean that you might not be hanged instead."

A short pause.

"Things don't look too hopeful for you, Herr Mazur.

Just consider what evidence we have against you. Shall I go through it?" He nodded in agreement.

"First of all, then, there is your pass with the . . . but I'll come to that later. Secondly, your presence in our lines. Thirdly, your appearing together with convicted spies and murderers. And then again your photograph on our black list."

"All that, sir, doesn't prove that I am also a spy! The picture in the black list is not of me at all."

"I am afraid the court martial will not take that view."

He stuck to it that nothing could be proved against him and that he would have to be sent to a prisoner's camp, which was just what he wanted.

I asked my people if they had conducted a thorough search of Mazur's clothes. They had found nothing.

"Just take your blanket off, Herr Mazur."

"Rubinstein," he corrected me politely, as he threw off the blanket. He was a well-built man, calm, without a trace of embarrassment or excitement.

"Lift up your feet!" Nothing was to be found. He wanted to pick up the blanket again.

"Wait! Lift up your arms!" He lifted them up, but held them pressed close to his body. I came nearer. Quick as lightning he made a grab at his left armpit, but already one of the guards had seized his hands.

"You're a polished rogue, Mazur, I must admit." The thing that was taken from his hand was a minute piece of paper, with a number of black hairs on it. The whole thing, fastened with glue, fitted into his armpit. The magnifying-glass was again requisitioned. There was nothing but letters and figures.

G.K.S. 11-z-9-G.T.P.

I looked at him questioningly.

"They are *only* the initial letters of a chain-prayer."

I asked for the scraps of paper that had been found before and compared letters and figures. Some of them were identical. But what did the last three letters mean? G.T.P.? I did not know how to get any further with Mazur. Suddenly I saw the way. A photograph had been found on him, that of a woman with two children, which bore the photographer's name. When I had questioned him just before, Mazur, in order to account for it, said he had picked up the photograph somewhere.

"Meissner, take my car and drive at once to Lodz. Hand

in this photograph to the Intelligence Bureau. I want to know immediately where the woman and the children live. The picture was taken in Tyras Polski's studio. Information must be telephoned to me."

That same night news reached me that the photograph was that of a certain Frau Ziglarski living in Tomaschow with her children. They were brought to Gombin by car. My spy drama was approaching its climax.

Next morning I had the prisoner brought in. Without his seeing what was happening his wife and children came in at the door.

" Turn round, Herr Rubinstein ! "

The next moment the eldest of the girls flung herself on her father's neck. His wife gazed at Ziglarski in bewilderment ; and he himself stood there dumbfounded and could not utter a word.

" What are you doing here, my husband ? I thought you were in America ! Only yesterday Gregor gave me the money from you."

" Not another word ! " I cried out as Mazur began to speak, and had his wife and children taken out again. This Gregor was a new pawn on the board ; Gregor Rofski from Tomaschow, as the woman, who had no idea of what had happened, readily told me. He, too, was arrested a few hours after ; a fortunate catch, as it later appeared. Like Manja, he, also, was chief of a division of the spy system.

" You have lost the game, Mazur," I said. " Now we'll talk sensibly to one another. There is no more chance of your being saved, but . . ." He did not let me finish my sentence.

" I know. It's all up. Do what you will with me."

" No Mazur, you must tell me several things first, and principally what brought you here, and what is written on this piece of paper."

" I won't tell you a thing : you will shoot me, anyhow."

Now I was forced to be extremely cruel, which in this case I found none too easy.

" You refuse to say anything ? That would be very ill-advised of you, because in that case not only you but your wife and children will be shot as well."

He sprang up as if beside himself.

" Shoot my children ! . . . my wife ! . . ." he cried out in a state of pitiable anguish. " You haven't the right to do that ; it would be murder ; it would be inhuman. My family has no inkling of my occupation."

" Then what do they live on ? "

" My pay, which I send to them."

"From America? Is that it? The court martial won't believe that from either you or your wife. And what is more, Rofski has already stated that your wife and children not only know of your profession, but have been accessory to it."

"Is that what the devil said? Filthy liar!"

I saw that his love for his family was the only means of making this man speak. I had to resort to deliberate cruelty in order to gain my ends. But this was a warfare in which any weapon was permissible. Victory would save the lives of thousands of German soldiers; in comparison with this, one man's mental anguish was a thing of little account. Naturally we could not have done more than send his wife and children to a detention camp. But, as far as he was concerned, they must be threatened with death.

"Mazur, your obstinacy is going to cost the life of your wife and children. Take him away. . . ." I said to my man. "Take his wife and children to the court martial!"

"Sir, sir!" he cried out in despair from the doorway. "I'll tell you everything. . . . For God's sake listen to me. . . ." At a sign from me he was taken away.

I went immediately into the house next door where I had found accommodation for his wife and children. I reassured them and promised to take Ziglarski-Mazur into my service if he confessed everything. The unfortunate people's distress moved me deeply.

Mazur must have passed through a terrible night in his cell before he stood confronting me the following morning with a colourless face, a broken man. Although he was so fond of cigarettes, he did not touch one. The question came blurting out from his lips, had his family been condemned yet?

"Not yet," I said. He seemed to regain a little hope.

"We won't waste time," I said in a businesslike tone as I turned to the secretary. "Take down."

I dictated the particulars, then a short account of the facts. Then I continued my dictation: "As for Ziglarski-Mazur's family, for being accessories to the crime of treason they will this afternoon . . ."

"Don't write that. . . . No, no. . . . Don't write that. . . . Write down. . . . Yes, write down . . . Mazur confessed everything. . . . You must let my wife and children go free, because they're innocent, I swear to God . . . I'll take the punishment. . . . Write down. . . . Write: 'The last words of the spy Mazur.'" The secretary wrote, Mazur dictated:

"The information in the black list is correct. I am the

sailor Ziglarski and have served in the Russian Navy. Later I went all round the world on various ships, particularly the Hamburg-America line, and learnt several languages. In Reval in 1909 I got to know a captain who engaged me for a voyage to England. We put in first of all at Kiel. One evening when I returned rather early from shore-leave, and wished to report to the captain, I found him in his cabin absorbed with photographs and drawings. I didn't want to disturb him, but when I went into the cabin later the captain wasn't there. Out of curiosity, a failing of mine, I bent over the photographs. . . . Next moment I received a blow on the head. When I came to, I was lying bound, in a dark room. Soon afterwards the captain came, and with him a stranger whom I had never seen before. 'You dog, so you've been playing the spy,' shouted the captain. 'What have you seen?' 'Nothing, sir, nothing at all.' The captain took a step towards the stranger, and the two spoke together in undertones. I could only hear the words: 'We've got his wife and children in Lodz as security.' I was puzzled and uneasy, and wondered what the two wanted with my family, but couldn't make it out. 'Now listen, Ziglarski, you've seen too much to-day. I must take precautions against your doing anything foolish. I'm working for the Russian Intelligence Service and need helpers. You're intelligent; you speak several languages, and you'd be just the right person for this kind of work. If you refuse I shall take you back to Russia, and you will be exiled together with your wife and family. You know what that means—Siberia! But if you enter my service you and your family will be all right. There's any amount of money to be earned.'

"I had no need to think it over. The very next day I received my first commission, which I carried out without difficulty. I merely had to collect something. From Kiel I went by train to Hamburg, where the unknown man from Kiel received me and kept me locked in my room for three days, until the captain took me back to his ship. From Hamburg we went to England, where I made friends with English sailors in order to find out something connected with submarines. In the meantime I travelled to the various naval harbours in order to collect written messages from certain addresses there and deliver them in London. I found my work most congenial, and made a lot of money. Then we went to the French naval harbour, Brest, where I had to get a job as dock hand and again hunt out information about submarines. One day a man gave me a small packet, and I had to follow him to the entrance, which we reached without

coming across any watchman. There we were again met by the man from Kiel. We drove straight to a small harbour where our ship was waiting for us, ready to sail for England. I wasn't even allowed to fetch my things from my lodgings. Voyages to America and Italy followed. For three whole years I wandered about the world like that, before I was given my first home leave. But only a few days later I was sought out by an unknown man and was ordered to go with him to Warsaw.

"I had noticed for some time that I was kept under perpetual observation. The man I was with this time handed me over to the Intelligence Department in Warsaw. I was treated as a prisoner there, and was thoroughly instructed in military matters, particularly concerning the Austrian army. Then I was given a complete training in photography. Przemysl was my next appointment."

"But what," I interrupted, "brought you here?"

"Not my own wishes, sir, but fate in the shape of the Intelligence Officer at Headquarters in Warsaw. That devil is responsible for all this. What is there to do, when he gives the order? He sent me here without any preparation."

"And what was your mission?"

"I'd like to say one thing more. I am not a Russian, I am a Pole. I am bound by no ties to the other side. But as you know, once you have worked as an agent, you can't go back on it. I had to accept the mission whether I wanted or not. I couldn't even see to the preparations which should, after all, have been made for my protection. But the Intelligence Officer is a man to whom an agent's life means no more than that!"—he snapped his fingers—"and up to the present day he hasn't taken it in that such matters must be prepared in detail. When I asked him if the way through had been properly ascertained, since only a living agent would be of any use to him, he said, 'You can get through anywhere with the Germans; you don't seem to know anything about spying.' I wish he was in my place now!" Then Mazur went on to his mission:

"The Russians are very much disturbed by the attacks in the north. They believe that it may be possible for them to be extended further, in the direction of St. Petersburg. So the whole front has got to be put under observation as far as the San. What matters most is the movement of troops and their destination."

"Were you to attend to all that by yourself?"

"No, I had assistants." And as I looked at him questioningly: "Good God, sir, have I got to betray them all?"

"You know what threatens you." Mazur's mental struggle was evident. But at last his love for his children won. He gave seven names, of which I already knew four.

"Antoscha and Pakulski have, as you are perhaps still unaware, already been shot. And I know Manja and Koslowski, too. Where are the other three?"

"It's all on the paper. The letters are the initial letters of the places where the agents reside: G. Gombin, K. Kutno, S. Sieradz, G. Graudenz, T Thorn, P. Posen. The figures 11, 7, 9 are the numbers of the three chief agents whose names I was to learn from Manja. Koslowski was to work these. I know 11 and 7, they are Antoscha and Manja's fiancé. It's fortunate that Antoscha is dead, for she is the most dangerous woman I know, and did not shrink from any murder."

Mazur set himself against betraying the agents in Posen.

"I can't get the words out of my mouth. I have worked with them a long time, and they have not betrayed me. And now I've got to do such a low-down thing." He strode about the room in his excitement. I handed him a piece of paper to write the names on. Several times he sat down to write them, but always sprang up again.

But in the end the names were written out.

"That is all I know. . . . I've done it now . . . because . . . Sir, you made me a promise. You are going to keep it?"

"Naturally, Mazur. Your family is in the next room. Say good-bye to them."

The very next day he was sentenced by the court martial. When I visited him once more before the trial, he asked if he couldn't be saved by entering into our service. He would be able to be of great assistance to us. I said, "No." The tragicomedy had to be played out.

The proceedings against Mazur and Koslowski were soon terminated, as both confessed fully. They received their sentence calmly, and neither asked for mercy. The sentence was death by shooting, as was to be expected. In the end both only asked for a speedy execution, to save their innocent families from too long suffering.

When I visited Mazur in his cell the next morning, he clasped my hand and held it tightly. He besought me earnestly not to leave him. I promised, and a gleam of pleasure flickered over his sunken face. Soon afterwards soldiers came into the cell and fastened a bandage over his eyes. He was lifted out of the house into a motor-car, and off we went at full speed. A second car followed with Koslowski. During the drive Mazur was silent, except once when he asked:

"Have we much further to go? Do hurry things up."

"Only a little longer, Mazur. You must endure it just that much more."

The car stopped. We went up a flight of stairs and entered a room. His bandage was removed. In front of him stood his wife and children.

Mazur was more dead than alive. He tottered and would have fallen, but his wife supported him. They were both in tears, and clung closely to one another.

"Be brave, my dear," he stammered, "it's all over. Look after the children. And now go . . . go. . . . I can't bear it any longer. Won't you finish with me, sir?"

"All right, Mazur, I'll finish now. I want to know if you will enter into our service?"

He stared at me, but could not say a word.

"Pawel! Pawel! Can't you speak? It's true, sir, isn't it? You're not going to shoot him? Won't you say something?"

The woman flung herself down half laughing, half crying, and caught hold of my feet.

Mazur had broken down completely. After a glass of water and a cigarette he was able to stand up again. At last he found his voice.

"I'll serve you faithfully, sir. I shall never forget what you have done for me." And he seized my hand and kissed it.

"I trust you. And don't ever forget that we have your wife and children as a pledge of your loyalty. You will be watched at every step. God help you and them if you play us false!"

"I swear to God I'll be true to you. You can take my family as pledge."

Mazur and Golba—from now on taken into the German Intelligence Service as O 1 and O 2—proved later to be my principal assistants. They brought in the most valuable information and were absolutely trustworthy, even in situations of the greatest danger, although working for both sides. This could not be avoided and was, in fact, the basis of their success. It was the first attempt we had made to use spies who were at the same time in Russian service. This choice was forced upon us by circumstances which were undoubtedly peculiar. But in this case it was crowned with success.

THE CLUE OF THE MISSING "C"

By

S. T. FELSTEAD

DAYLIGHT was fading at Wilhelmshaven on the afternoon of December 15th, 1914, as three light cruisers slipped out of the harbour bound for a destination that was a profound secret.

The crews aboard the warships had been sworn to silence ; beyond the fact that they were steaming out into the North Sea to make a surprise attack somewhere, they knew nothing of their mission.

Once out into clear water they moved due west at top speed, their funnels belching smoke. Down in the ammunition rooms the gun crews were getting out hundreds of shells, while on the decks the officers keenly scrutinised the horizon for signs of enemy vessels.

All through the night they pushed on with frantic haste without meeting a single hostile craft. The gun chambers gradually filled with shell, and when the grey dawn had come the cruisers were approaching the English coast.

At half-past seven the order came for action. The three ships were within sight of England. Five or six miles away the officers on the bridges could see the low-lying town of Hartlepool. Sharp orders rang out and the raiders, steaming broadside on to the coast, suddenly began a terrific bombardment.

It was then eight o'clock in the morning. Most of the men of Hartlepool had already gone to their work ; their womenfolk were engaged in the prosaic occupation of washing-up breakfast dishes and preparing the children for school. Out of the morning mist, unseen and unsuspected, a rain of heavy shells came hurtling over the town.

Shrieking people rushed hither and thither as one terrible explosion after another burst in the streets and houses. Frantically they rushed for shelter, asking themselves what devil's work was afoot. Germans they knew for certain—but where? No sign could be seen of enemy warships, for they were securely hidden beneath the haze that enveloped the sea.

Houses went up in flames, shells burst on the roads, scattering death and maiming dozens of men and women running for safety. It was Hartlepool's first taste of what had long been threatened—a bombardment off the coast. Mothers saw their children killed under their eyes, while people helplessly cowering in the shelter of some building watched police and soldiers running up and down the streets dragging the injured to sanctuary of some sort.

An hour went by. Then, as surprisingly as it had begun, the firing ceased and the townsfolk slowly came out to survey the terrible scene. Death lay everywhere. Mangled bodies were strewn in the streets, wrecked houses, still burning, were being searched for the dead and dying. When it was possible to take an account of the devastation that had come upon poor Hartlepool, there were three hundred people who had met their end, and another six hundred being removed into hastily improvised hospitals.

What had brought this fearful raid about? Why had Hartlepool been singled out? It was an open, undefended town. There was not even a single English warship within an hour's sail.

As silently as they had come the raiders had disappeared, while Hartlepool, licking its wounds, vainly discussed how it was possible for German ships to cross the North Sea without meeting any resistance. Alas, it took them a long time to find out. Not until the Great War was over did they learn that an audacious German spy had visited their town only a few days before the bombardment, and succeeded in telegraphing to Holland the information that the north-east coast of England in the region of The Hartlepools was not patrolled by English warships.

. . . .

The opening chapter of the story begins in 1911 when John Hahn, a man of German extraction who owned a small bakery business in the ancient shipbuilding town of Deptford, took his Belgian wife to Antwerp for a holiday.

They stayed at a *pension* in Antwerp kept by the wife's parents. It was a homely place, where five francs a day covered the tariff, and the surroundings were democratic to a degree.

Hahn struck up an acquaintance with a German who called himself Karl Frederick Muller, and in the course of a few days they were boon companions. Muller, a tall, cultured type of man, made much of the insignificant baker.

" You come from Deptford ? " he inquired. " Ah, I know

it well. I have spent some years of my life in England. Next time I go over I'll look you up."

He asked Hahn many questions about his business affairs, elicited that they were not unduly prosperous, and remarked, " One of these days I may be able to help you."

Now, Hahn was no fool. Putting many things together, he began to wonder what his new-found friend really was. More than once Muller took him to a *Weinstube* in the city, kept by a stout little German who gave attentive ear to all Muller had to say. Hahn was given a glass of wine to keep him quiet while the other two conferred ; he was never given an opportunity of hearing anything, though he could guess, by the furtive demeanour of the two conspirators, that they were up to no particular good.

It intrigued him. Returning to the *pension* after one of these excursions, he said bluntly to Muller, " What are you ? A German spy ? I can't make out what you do for a living."

" What makes you think I am a spy ? "

" My wife and I have been wondering what takes you to the docks every night."

" I'm a dealer in tinned goods. My principals have sent me to find out what is being imported into this country."

" Easy enough to discover that," retorted Hahn sharply. " You've only got to look in the shops."

Muller laughed the matter off. He was not a man to be embarrassed by simple questioning like this. But, for the remainder of his holiday, Hahn steered clear of Muller and forgot all about him until the war came in 1914. He was brought to mind with sudden force about the end of August that year, when a letter arrived from his wife's parents, relating all that was occurring in Antwerp and adding :

" You remember that wine-shop where John used to go with a man named Muller, who stayed here three years ago. The police arrested the proprietor for a spy and had him shot two or three mornings afterwards."

Hahn had suffered troubles of his own. The dingy little shop had not prospered ; he had contracted debts he could not possibly meet, with the result that in 1913 he had gone through the Bankruptcy Court with no more than £3 worth of realisable assets to meet debts of something like £2000. Arrangements had been made for his business to continue and he was still selling bread and pastries in Deptford when the Great War broke out.

He wondered, when he heard about the fate of the wine-shop proprietor in Antwerp, whether he would ever see Muller again. But it was only a casual thought. Such things

as espionage were outside his province, even if there had been one or two entirely unjustified sneers by old friends that he was probably a German spy who ought to be in safe custody.

Business speedily grew worse. His German name was now a menace, and it began to dawn upon him that he would go through an uncomfortable time before the war came to an end.

Two months went by. One evening at the end of September he was serving in his shop when a tall stranger entered and bade him good-evening with a friendly smile.

"Do you remember me?" he asked.

Hahn did so—faintly. "I've seen you somewhere," he replied.

"I'm Muller. We met in Antwerp three years ago."

"Yes," said Hahn in no welcome tone. "I recollect you well enough now. What are you doing in England at this time?" The memory of the wine-shop struck him with redoubled force, as did the inexplicable visits to the Antwerp docks.

"I've brought you a message from your father-in-law," continued the unwanted visitor. "Can we talk privately?"

In no very cordial fashion, Hahn invited the other upstairs. Abstractedly he listened to what Muller had to say; it was not worth such a visit.

"I'm much obliged to you," he said at last, "but the tale about my wife's people is a little mysterious. We heard from them not so long ago and they said nothing about seeing you. Tell me straight what you are here for? I'm in trouble enough as it is."

"I've come to England to sell tinned goods. Didn't I inform you in Antwerp what I did for a living?"

"You did, though I didn't believe you. I think you're a German spy and I'd be much obliged if you'd clear out of here now. There are people in this town who would lynch me if they knew who you were."

"Don't be a fool," said the other sharply. "I've got a Dutch passport as a commercial traveller. It describes me as a Russian and there's nothing to fear. What if I am a spy?" he went on with a touch of menace in his voice. "You wouldn't dare denounce me."

"Wouldn't I?"

"No. I'd tell the police things about you that would make you sorry you had ever been born. What do you think would happen if I said you were one of my agents?" He stared Hahn in the eye, laughed in saturnine fashion, and waited.

Hahn wavered and was lost. He listened to Muller boldly confessing that he was indeed a German spy—" A.-E. III " in the secret service. It meant Agent No. 3, Antwerp-England, and from his own account, he was a most important man.

" And now," asked Hahn, after he had heard it all, " exactly what has brought you here ? "

" You may be able to help. I take it business is none too good with you."

" And not so bad that I want to have anything to do with you. So far, I've succeeded in dodging the Tower of London. Where are you going from here ? "

" Don't worry about me for a time. I'm off to the north of England. It may be that our warships will give the English something to remember before long. You'll hear about it later. Possibly I'll come and see you again." He went out into the street, leaving Hahn asking himself whether he ought not to have called a policeman.

Weeks passed by, miserable ones for Hahn. His position began to grow desperate. One by one his customers deserted him ; former friends insulted him and his wife, until the tearful woman implored him to take refuge in an internment camp.

" We can't stand this worry much longer," she went on. " We're well-nigh starving as it is." The husband thought so too, but he hung on, hoping for providence to intervene on his behalf.

London was now beginning to undergo periodical outbreaks of mob-fury. People were seeing German spies in all manner of strange places. Stout old Teutons who had long forgotten their Fatherland were being accused of sinister conspiracies by the spy-maniacs until they were compelled to seek police protection.

It was not long, therefore, before John Hahn started to feel the full force of the hysterical blast. One night a brick came hurtling through his shop window with yells of " German spy." Another and then another followed. Then some one started to wreck the shop. In ten minutes the cakes and bread had been looted ; bags of flour were strewn all over the place as though Father Christmas had been prematurely celebrating. To continue the business any longer was impossible. The shop was boarded up, while Hahn and his wife cowered in their rooms upstairs. So terror-stricken had they become that they no longer dared to walk the streets.

Deptford, of course, was in no happy position itself. Right in the danger line of enemy aircraft intent on raiding

London, its inhabitants were ripe for mischief of some kind. A helpless German baker was easy prey for the roughs who infested the neighbourhood. As soon as the raids began, spy-hunting became a favourite pastime. And so it went on until the middle of December 1914, when Hahn, venturing outside to buy an evening paper, saw something that numbed his heart.

In great flaring headlines it was announced that there had been a terrible bombardment of The Hartlepools. Out of the morning mists that day a squadron of light cruisers had suddenly appeared off the coast, opened fire on the defenceless town, with appallingly heavy loss of life.

There had been no warning. A rain of shells had descended upon the towns before anybody could seek shelter, and within an hour the German warships had vanished before any reprisals could be undertaken.

Hahn, gazing fearsomely at the news, at once asked himself if Muller had been responsible. He remembered the spy's boasts ; all he prayed was that he would see no more of him.

A mere twenty-four hours was sufficient for his hopes to be falsified. The very next evening Muller walked into his shop, boldly as though he feared nothing, with an expression that told its own tale. Hahn looked at him dumbfounded.

"Good-evening," said Muller calmly. "Seen this?" holding up a newspaper.

"Yes. Are you responsible?"

"I am. I told you before I went away that I was going to give the English something to think about."

"It's murder."

"Not it. War's war, all the world over."

If Hahn had possessed any strength of character, he would have gone outside, called the nearest policeman, and given Muller in charge straightaway ; but his weak, vacillating nature was unable to withstand the personality of his companion and so he allowed Muller to accompany him upstairs, where he listened to a long story of weeks spent on the north-east coast watching for signs of British warships, aided by a spy in Hull who was in a position to know many things that no foreigner should ever have known at such a time.

"How did you get this information across?" asked Hahn curiously. "Surely they didn't allow you to send a telegram?"

Muller, told of a message he had telegraphed to an address in Rotterdam. "In my code," he explained. "You know, I

told you I was travelling in tinned goods. I sent an order telling my people in Holland where the nearest British ships were lying, and how long it would be before they could reach Hartlepool. Simplicity itself," he added, "provided our ships were not sighted crossing the North Sea. They left Wilhelmshaven at dusk the night before, steamed at top speed, and reached the coast in the early morning. They were clear away before anything could catch them."

Hahn listened to it all with set face, Muller watching him closely throughout.

"Now," said the spy seductively, "what about joining forces with me? There's nothing for you here; that I can plainly see. They've been wrecking your shop, haven't they?"

"All that and more. I'm ruined."

"Then come with me. I can give you a job that will pay you well."

Hahn looked his unwanted visitor in the eye. "I've no wish to be shot," he replied. "Things are bad enough; but no firing party for me."

Muller persisted, until Hahn said, "Get out of my shop before I call the police. I'll have nothing to do with you or your filthy work."

"Come, come, just a little help. I want a few particulars out of Woolwich Arsenal. You know what I mean; the guns they are making, the sort of ammunition that is going to the Western Front."

"You've had my answer," retorted Hahn angrily. "Leave my shop and don't come back again. They'll shoot you for sure, but not me if I can help it."

"All right, you'll regret this," was Muller's parting shot. "Wait until you've starved a bit longer." He laughed contemptuously and disappeared into the night. If Hahn again had seized the fleeting chance, he would have followed Muller and handed him over to the police and thereby saved himself endless suffering.

He did nothing of the sort. Meekly pursuing the line of least resistance, he went back into his shop, shut the door, telling himself at the same time that he had seen the last of the man who would surely send him to his doom.

Muller, for his part, succeeded in making his way back to Antwerp. From all accounts, he had to report there to the chief of the German espionage, presumably to give an account of his activities in England.

But neighbours had seen Muller covertly entering his shop. Air-raids were becoming increasingly frequent and

accusations were now positively made that the baker was a German spy. Within a month the shop had been smashed to pieces. On any occasion that Hahn and his wife ventured out of doors, they were followed down the street and molested in a manner that demanded police protection.

It was obvious he could not carry on much longer. He had no other place to go to, his money was exhausted, and, short of actual starvation, there seemed to be no other alternative than to go to the authorities and ask to be interned until the end of the war.

This was the position, then, at the end of January. One dark, foggy night, while the unhappy couple were brooding on their troubles in the seclusion of the upstairs parlour, there came a knock at the front door. Hahn, in fear and trembling, went down to answer it.

"Can I come in?" asked Muller.

Hahn let him in without a word. As they walked through the shop Muller surveyed the damage with malevolent amusement.

"Where have you been since you were here?" asked the baker.

"Over to Antwerp and back again," said Muller. "They've been keeping me busy since I last saw you. Have you made up your mind about helping me?" he added. "It's about time."

Up in the parlour they talked the matter over. Hahn was now desperate, ready to do anything to get a little money.

"What have I got to do?" he inquired. "I know nothing about this business."

Muller, to whom it all seemed a huge joke, laughed at him. "I want a few things out of Woolwich Arsenal, as I told you before. Over in Rotterdam they'll pay good money for what they want. Do you think you could manage that job?"

The baker could truthfully say that such a task was not beyond him, for he had spent the greater part of his life in the district. As he told Muller, he knew many of the Arsenal workers, even belonged to a club used by numbers of them.

"That's good," said Muller. "Now, I want you to find out what size guns are being made there and how many are being turned out in a week. And while you are about it," he went on, "you may be able to ascertain the number of troops that are being sent to France."

Muller went off, after paying over some money, and Hahn, the very next day, set about his task. He started off by

waylaying a friend employed at the Arsenal, aroused his sympathy by recapitulating the misfortunes that had overtaken his business, and asked how much longer the war would last.

"Don't worry," said the recipient of his confidence. "It'll be over soon. We're turning out enough guns to blow the Germans to hell. Two hundred and fifty every week."

"What!" exclaimed Hahn incredulously, thinking that this was the easiest way in the world to do a little spying.

"Yes," said the chatty friend, "and 12-inch guns at that."

The new agent then went to a Plumstead public-house to pick up a few more items of news. In the billiard-room, where he struck up an argument about our "Contemptible little army," he offered to bet drinks round that "we" had half a million men in France.

A sceptical acquaintance, in the manner common to public-houses, said, "Don't talk rot. If we've got a quarter of a million there, you can call me a Dutchman."

The discussion raged hot and strong, with everybody joining in. A gentleman engaged under the War Office was brought in to arbitrate. He declared Hahn the loser in that the number could not possibly exceed 100,000. So, like a man the baker paid up. It cost him 1*s.* 4*d.*, but he duly passed the information on to Muller, who in his turn, sent it on to Rotterdam, from which place it no doubt passed on to German General Headquarters.

All this time Muller himself was moving around England, making a pretence of selling his tinned wares, and seeing much of valuable interest to an enemy agent. Most of his information went out of the country in the form of letters, apparently harmless in themselves, but containing messages written in invisible ink.

Unknown to him, however, a good many things were happening in London, which tended to make his work infinitely more dangerous. There was a big censorship staff which dealt with all foreign telegrams and correspondence. Chemists were busily engaged testing letters, newspapers, and even wrappers, for secret inks. Code experts were at work as well, deciphering anything that might hide a spy's communications.

Over in Holland itself, the centre of German espionage directed against England, there were British agents tracking down all suspicious addresses. Muller's receiver was now on the black list, and anything that came through for him was at once held up while strenuous efforts were made to track the sender.

Poor little Hahn in his shop blissfully laboured away at nights, writing out his various items of news. Muller had provided him with some formalin, some special steel nibs, and a hard-surface paper which would prevent the crude secret ink from running.

Many letters had gone through the counter-espionage intelligence about the recruiting of Lord Kitchener's army, the number of New Army divisions at Aldershot, the ships we were building on the Clyde, and quite a number of other facts ; but for the better part of three months not a single clue as to the identity of the spy could be discovered. His letters were being posted in various parts of England, and beyond such vague clues, gave no hint as to where he might be operating next.

And thus matters might have gone on indefinitely, but for one of those amazing accidents which so frequently combine to the unmasking of a spy.

It is possible that Muller's information had been tested with unprofitable results. Whatever the reason, his allowance from Holland stopped suddenly and he began to grow desperate.

In turn he stopped his payments to Hahn, who thought himself justified in writing to the agent in Rotterdam with some gleanings of his own and requesting remuneration direct. To explain this lapse of discipline on his part, he wrote to "Mr. F. Leydecker" to say that "C" had gone to Newcastle, so he was writing himself. On the back of the envelope, in case the letter should not be delivered, he put an address : "L. Cohen, 201, —— Street, Deptford."

The postal censorship staff were delighted : here was a clue at last. Down to Deptford went a party of detectives, there were not many streets in the borough bearing the number "201," and in less than an hour they had captured their man.

All Hahn's pessimistic forebodings were evident as the detectives entered. At first he simulated indignation ; then, when his captors were upstairs, sullenness. An amateurish secret ink outfit gave him away completely.

"All right," said the man in charge. "We'll be taking you along with us, but before we go, where's 'C'?"

"Don't ask me," retorted Hahn foolishly. "How should I know ?" He might have saved himself a few years' gaol had he been sensible enough to indulge in that open confession which is so good for the soul. But he chose to keep his mouth shut—for the time being.

"If you know he has gone to Newcastle," he added, "go and find him there."

By the time they were ready to take him away, a buzzing crowd had gathered around the shop door. A woman remembered a tall, foreign-looking fellow who had often visited Hahn; she had managed to extract from Mrs. Hahn the information that he was a Russian, who lived somewhere in Russell Square, London.

To find the missing "C" was like looking for a needle in a haystack. Round about Russell Square there were innumerable boarding-houses where "tall foreigners" lived. All the Bloomsbury *pensions* had to be ransacked; it was not until forty of them had been raked through that a woman remembered one of her guests who had gone away saying he would be in Newcastle for a few days.

So off to Newcastle the detectives went. Here the search was easier; there were but a few places in the town where foreigner might hide. The local police were enlisted in the man-hunt, and before long "C" was found. Tall, thin, moustached, very self-possessed, he spoke English with a pronounced German accent, but denied being anything but a Russian and an ally of England.

"Know anything about a man named Hahn in Deptford?" asked the hunters.

"I've never heard of such a person, and I've never been in Deptford. I object to you treating me in this fashion."

"Don't bother about that. Tell your story to the authorities in London."

Sullenly he got into the waiting motor-car and the long drive back to London began. At Scotland Yard he was confronted with a number of Hahn's neighbours. One and all identified him, even though Muller gave a point-blank denial to their testimony.

"All right," remarked the officer interrogating him. "We've got a number of letters here, written to some one in Holland whom we think you know. Do you remember them?"

He read some of the epistles that had been directed to "Mr. Leydecker." Muller stubbornly maintained that he knew nothing.

"Perhaps," persisted the interrogator, "you would be good enough to rewrite the contents of one of these letters."

"I shall do nothing of the sort. You cannot trap me in that fashion."

And nothing more could be got out of him. All that could be done for the present was to lock him up and see if his confederate Hahn would be more talkative.

Visions of the firing-party, which had haunted his brain from the beginning, provided a sufficient incentive to unburden his soul.

When the time came for the pair to face their trial, there was evidence enough to convict them a dozen times over. Hahn was a British subject ; he had the right of trial by a civil court, a privilege which many German spies claimed in the mistaken belief that it was more merciful than a court-martial. So three judges of the High Court tried the pair at the Old Bailey.

For Muller there was no hope. He stood condemned, if only for the information that Hahn gave about his responsibility for the bombardment of The Hartlepools. He was taken to the Tower where he was shot after a pathetic finale in which he insisted upon shaking hands with the firing-party. As for Hahn, he was a pitiful spectacle, and it was easy to believe that he had fallen a victim to spy-mania, and could be accounted more sinned against than sinning. He escaped with seven years' penal servitude.

Muller was a rolling stone, who had been many things in his time and none of them long. One might best describe him as an international adventurer. He spoke half a dozen different tongues, and was undoubtedly a secret service agent of considerable value to Germany.

PRIVATE PORTNOY'S CODE-BOOK

By

COLONEL VICTOR K. KALEDIN

SINCE early evening, on October 22, 1914, a thin fog had pervaded Ochta, the slum hotel suburb of St. Petersburg. The grey ribbons of the streets were splashed with grey pools, and even the churches seemed to have grey petalled domes beneath the grey blanketing of the rain-burdened clouds. Continuously, out of the murk, sounded the clanging reverberations of wartime tramcars and the grinding rumble of lorries. Alone in my cheerless room, I was sensitive to a haunting, indefinable uneasiness, and drew my chair nearer the fire. The painted *ikon* above the mantelpiece seemed to wear an oddly sinister air, and there was something threatening in the faint shrilling of police whistles which every now and again was borne on the gusty river wind.

I was now "Colonel Nicholas Mousin," a young-old, drink-sodden creature, cashiered from an obscure line regiment on a charge of gambling and petty theft. And my identification papers in my new capacity bore the yellow stamp of the court-martial commission, as well as the covering remarks by the Russian Intelligence Service.

Spies of the Seventh Section of the Russian General Staff, to which I belonged, worked on a principle devised by the Chief, General Batioushin, known as "the ebony box." By this no one agent was supposed to know the identity or scope of operations of his colleagues, and consequently I could only communicate with Headquarters entirely at my own risk. Since my degradation ceremony in the Fortress of St. Peter and Paul had been witnessed by the St. Petersburg Gendarme Force, but since also they were kept in ignorance of its true import and ultimate purpose, there was always the danger of my being picked up by a detective and having to call in official interference, which was to be avoided at all costs.

It was precisely for this reason that I had chosen the rôle of a broken-down and disreputable army colonel. I presented a figure slightly choleric, abusive when speaking of the army that had thrown me out, inclined to bully at

the smallest provocation, and addicted to cheap restaurants with garish music and hostess-waitresses. My old army uniform was in itself a perfect natural disguise—a dark-green tunic with faint traces of former epaulettes, similar coloured breeches with a thin red cavalry stripe, and rather sloppy boots worn by the average officer stationed in a provincial town. After a period of training my voice to husky alcoholic tones, my skin to a thriving bristle, my eyes to a steady glare, my teeth to a dirty unbrushed yellow, and my palate to abominably strong cigars, I visited the Russian Intelligence Service Headquarters and was provided with a passport and an "invalid ticket," giving me the right to travel through the Empire and visit various battlefields.

Anything more utterly sordid or commonplace than my present position would be hard to imagine. I was now in every sense an outcast, a piece of human driftwood, hidden in a drab and odourful bed-sitting-room in an obscure slum hotel.

Huddled forward over the fire, I sat and listened to the rising wind, and presently I slipped into a half-sleep. For some little time I did not move, and then suddenly I was once more alert. Some unaccustomed sound had penetrated my consciousness, and the next minute I felt instinctively that there was some one outside my door.

There were two doors to my room—one opening into the corridor, the other leading through to the servants' quarters. I tried the corridor entrance first and found no one there. Approaching the second door, I stopped and remained absolutely still. For a space nothing happened, and then, very faintly, but very distinctly, there came a tapping. One. . . . Six. . . . One. . . . Six. . . .

My heart quickened its beat, and I drew a long breath to steady myself. With all my senses stretched, I felt, rather than heard, some one on the other side of the thin panels move closer; as though assured that the message had been received. Softly turning up my dusty ceiling-lamp, I opened the door and stood back.

With something of a shock I saw a woman enter the room. And not only a woman, but a woman of quite exceptional beauty. In both her clothes and her bearing she had the true aristocratic touch, and if of the underworld then, at any rate, she must have belonged to its highest circles. Her head was small and gracefully carried, her face a pale oval with deep blue eyes, her figure slim and rather short. I bowed, but she did not speak, and she not so much evaded my scrutiny as paid no attention to me at all.

There was a sharp metallic click as the unknown put out the lamp, leaving the room in darkness but for the feeble glow of the fire. The woman then sat down, lighted a cigarette and for some minutes smoked calmly, still without uttering a word.

For my part I remained where I stood, my nerves tense. I could not but be susceptible to the drama of the situation —alone there in my dark and squalid room with a mysterious and beautiful woman, and in the background, outside the the grimy window-panes, the windy night and the dull rumble of traffic. At length, as though unthinkingly and in idle boredom, my companion's fingers began to tap sharply on the arm of her chair.

German messenger code! . . . My pulse beat a trifle faster, and presently the ghost of a smile twitched my lips. The message being transmitted to me was indeed a communication from Major von Lauenstein, direct. I was to enter the Enteric Ward of the Tzarskoe-Selo Hospital, timing my arrival as nearly as possible with that of the next consignment of sick and wounded German prisoners from the Galician front. I was on the point of tapping back my understanding and acceptance, when some deep inward impulse made me refrain.

I have always relied ultimately upon my instinctive reactions, and over and over again that indefinable little stab, little quiver of prompting in my brain, has stood me in good stead. It is, perhaps, in part a primitive, elemental faculty, discovered and developed during my early years of wild gipsy life upon the steppes. In the present instance I was suddenly intensely conscious of a lull in the noise of the traffic without, and the next moment there came a peculiar flash of light on the opposite wall.

Was it some kind of prearranged signal? Had the other been shadowed on her way to me? Even as I smoked a tasteless cigarette, and waited for the traffic to resume its normal note, the suspense was sharply broken. I heard the wheels of a *troika* stop outside the hotel, and then the heavy sound of military boots on the cobbles of the tiny courtyard below. The woman did not move, but sent two quick taps through the gloom. She was, it seemed, uncertain whether she had been followed or not. I was in two minds how exactly to act for the best, when by four more taps she indicated I could do as I pleased.

Opening the door carefully, I stole out into the corridor. Then, setting my teeth, I walked swiftly in the direction of the restaurant, which was upon the same floor, at the end

of the passage. Just outside the restaurant was a small waiter's cubby-hole, now in dense shadow, and as I approached I had a glimpse of something moving in the doorway. For this I was not altogether unprepared—a police agent was nearly always attached to such hotels, and as a waiter combined the rôles of "bouncer" and observer of suspicious characters. As I came abreast of the cubby-hole, a tall form darted out, with arm upraised. Death was in that arm, and as I pressed the button of my electric torch a bullet ripped past me and thudded into the wall. With the whole weight of my body behind the blow, I lunged forward and caught the agent on the point of the jaw, sending him with a crash to the floor.

Turning, I ran back to my room. It was an official raid right enough, of the kind in which the Russian authorities specialised. Behind me I could hear the stumbling and puffing of the raiding party as they burst through the restaurant door, and seizing the woman by the hand, I hurried her over to a large window, which I remembered was provided with a fire-escape. To guard against dizziness I told her to count the steps as she descended, and myself led the way, with a prayer that the courtyard beneath might not be watched. The rungs of the escape were slippery with fog, and before we reached the bottom, shots whistled over our heads from the window above.

Reaching the ground in safety, we were across the courtyard in a second, and out in a narrow side-street. I saw two police *troikas* standing near a disreputable tea-house across the way. The drivers were absent, probably warming themselves with *vodka* or having a friendly game of cards. I grabbed my companion's arm and bundled her unceremoniously into the nearer of the carriages. A vivid burst of flame came from the entrance to the courtyard, and several high-velocity bullets smashed against the vehicle. The horses reared, and, amid a chorus of savage yells, we plunged into the darkness.

The second police *troika* followed hard at our heels. We had, perhaps, fifty yards advantage—not more. Meanwhile, as we passed, windows flew up and frightened voices shrieked wildly for help. Traffic scattered, and early morning milkcarts disappeared precipitately up adjoining streets. Several times revolver shots cracked from iron-grilled doorways. A mounted gendarme loomed ahead out of the fog, threw up his rifle and fired, and then went crashing out of our path into a temporary barrier which protected a sand-filled gutter. In the excitement of the chase I let out one

of the fierce steppe yells I had learned in my youth, and the horses responded in an extra burst of speed. My heart was pounding, there was an agonising cramp in my hands which were cut by the straining reins, my eyes were sticky and half-blinded with sweat.

Just below the junction of an unnamed street with the broad avenue of Peter the Great, our pursuers came to grief. The police *troika*, turning the corner too sharply, struck a hydrant and was completely wrecked. Both men and horses were badly injured. I have a somewhat confused memory, then, of our dash to the New Ochtenski Park, of an endless line of warehouses, of level-crossings with sleepy mounted Cossacks guarding them, of a succession of narrow streets with slum children begging for coppers, of small chapels with gaudily painted doors. And still in my ears rang the drumming wheels of our former pursuers.

I parted with my mysterious companion in the night's adventure at the door of the Mission Church in Great Ochta Street. As I drank a cup of hot coffee at an open-air stand, I thought how strange that parting was. The woman had merely smiled and waved a hand towards an approaching yellow-green tramcar, which she boarded. Not a word or even a handclasp, in recognition of all we had just been through together.

It is, however, not uncommon for an agent to receive an incomplete message in the course of his work. Outside the pages of fiction, a spy is trained to respond to hints, and less than hints, and to act accordingly. In the present instance it was quite impossible for me to get into touch with either the woman messenger or my German chief himself, and, as I quietly turned the matter over, one obvious possibility occurred to me. Major von Lauenstein most likely wanted me to effect an escape among the prisoners coming in from the Galician front. Such an escape would concern a figure of some importance, and very probably it was one of my fellow German agents. I ran over in my mind the most noted German-Austrian spies who were supposed to operate along the Russian lines—Hans Kneuberg (German), Petrash Pazera (Hungarian), Heinrich Schtaub (German), Iontek Krichevski (Polish-German), and last but not least the famous and illusive Abraam Portnoy. In any case, to secure my entry into the enteric ward at the Tzarskoe-Selo Hospital must be my immediate purpose. After that my own resourcefulness and vigilance would have to show me the rest of the way.

The arrival of prisoners from the Galician front took

place, as I knew, at intervals of between a week and ten days. Moreover, the last batch had but recently been received. That same day, therefore, following the printed instructions attached to my German spy-credentials, I visited a certain neutral Consulate in St. Petersburg. The Consul himself was German-born and essentially a patriot; and he had been chosen by the Berlin High Command to act as a privileged spy, and to transmit current military data, with marginal notes of his own. He was in contact with prominent German agents in Russia, and afforded them the valuable facility of genuine neutral passports.

In my case the Consul promised his assistance, and also suggested that a substantial sum would settle the little matter of the raid on the hotel. The Legation, I was informed, would get into touch with a certain influential lady-in-waiting at Court, for the opening of negotiations between the Consul and the Chief of the St. Petersburg Police. The necessary bribe would be charged to a gentleman resident in Berlin. As regards the immediate furthering of my requirements, an equally effectual proposal was forthcoming. Since the Legation cars were unofficially attached to the regular ambulance service of the Tzarskoe-Selo Hospital, I could be at once conveyed there without any danger of interference by the police. For my part, I explained that I intended staging a sharp gastric attack, and would communicate with the Consul very shortly.

In the Service my nickname was "Fool Chance K.14," and in this case I certainly seemed faced ultimately with a sufficiently doubtful proposition.

Entering an old-fashioned pharmacy establishment, I asked for a popular shampoo, consisting of olive oil and flaked Castile soap. Then, while the pharmacist was wrapping up a six-ounce bottle of the mixture, I groaned and inquired if he could give me something for acute gastric cramp. The man shuffled away into the back regions of his premises to make up a prescription, and after a moment I got through on the shop-telephone to the Consulate, requesting the car to be sent along as soon as possible. With that, I swallowed the contents of the shampoo-bottle, and obtained most realistic results almost on the spot.

The Consulate car arrived and rescued me from a decidedly inhospitable chemist and a gaping crowd. I had really no need for acting, and was carried tenderly out of the shop.

II

At the Tzarskoe-Selo Hospital I underwent a preliminary examination by the resident doctor. I still felt extremely ill, but I consoled myself with the thought that everything appeared to be going according to plan. Very shortly, however, I had an unpleasant shock. The cheerful, snub-nosed nurse in the Enteric Ward informed me briskly that I would soon be put right. I was to be given a dose of calomel, and then pronounced fit for active service.

With failure confronting me at the very outset, I finally decided upon a somewhat risky move. Having found out from the nurse that she was of pure Russian stock, I trusted her up to a point. If no more than their sex the world over, Russian women love mysteries, and I asked the nurse if she would like to play a part in an especial secret. She responded even better than I hoped, and I gave her as dramatically as possible the following instructions. She was to put through from a public telephone booth a call to " Room 66 " at the Headquarters of the Russian General Staff. She would then give her name and occupation, and say that her patient, Colonel Nicholas Mousin, had a habit of swearing in German. That words " swearing " and " German " were a code combination, which would have her switched through automatically to my Russian chief, General Batioushin.

The conversation with General Batioushin had the desired result. And in conclusion my chief emphasised that any mention of the matter would incur the anger of the Tzar. To " anger the Tzar " was no light phrase, either—standing for Siberia, or worse. The nurse then had to suggest to the hospital authorities that I be treated as an " X " casualty, or military non-combatant suffering mostly from nervous and slight gastric trouble, caused by condemned market food.

I could not help smiling, on my nurse's return, at her expression of positive fright. However, she in some sense got her own back later, by giving me the calomel as originally prescribed, and ordering my regulation chicken broth to be tepid instead of hot !

Early in the month the first German prisoners, wounded and otherwise, had began to arrive at St. Petersburg. They were mostly men from the Baltic provinces, many of them speaking Russian fluently, and their destination was the model internment camp in the suburbs of the city, commanded by Major-General Tcherep-Spiridowitch and

Colonel Poklewski-Kozell. Some of the prisoners, suffering from enteritis, were transferred to the Tzarskoe-Selo Hospital—one of the largest hospitals, nominally under the supervision of Her Majesty the Tzarina Alexandra Feodorovna.

A small fortune had been spent in adapting the beautiful suite of apartments at the Tzarskoe-Selo Palace for its present use. Luxurious and cheerful sitting-rooms filled with hothouse plants, a superb dining-room—decorated with *ikons* and gold mosiac work, did not give one the impression of being in a hospital at all. The Enteric Ward itself had stuccoed walls, disinfected and painted white, and the ward's chief ornament was a True Iber crucifix, a magnificent example of rosewood work, with dazzling green garnets and aquamarines making a design of fantastic flowers on the ivory and silver base.

Nevertheless, the shadow of the German Intelligence hung over the inner life of every room and ward—as, indeed it did over too many high places in Russia. Pro-German feeling, even if not carried to the point of active treason, was especially fostered by the presence of society women who openly spied upon the Russian military commander of the hospital, Colonel Poushkin, a mild elderly man with a mania for disinfectants and strict barrack discipline.

Abusive language and free expectorations (outstanding characteristics of the pseudo Colonel Mousin) secured me next what I desired. As a distinctly troublesome and disreputable patient, I was soon moved into a cot in the so-called "German" corner of the ward. There I was left to grumble ineffectually over the broth and biscuit meals, and altogether I passed a thoroughly boring and uncomfortable week. If my outraged stomach was somewhat improved, my peace of mind most certainly was not. At night I slept badly, my mind continually dwelling upon certain unanswerable problems. I was still haunted by the face and personality of the woman-agent with whom I had escaped from the police. In some vague, indefinable fashion I seemed to sense in her a more than casual and passing significance. Again, there was the ultimate question of my mission itself—just when, where and how was I going to establish the contact that was expected of me? In my enforced inaction and uncertainty I often cursed my German chief roundly for leaving me so hopelessly in the dark.

In the end I decided I might be able to learn something from General Batioushin, who was in charge of the Galician prison camps. And I was on the point of arranging a telephone call to Headquarters when the Head Nurse, Grand Duchess

Olga, superintended the arrival of a prisoner in the ward. She directed that he should be put in the cot next to my own. The prisoner, without speaking a word, turned towards the Grand Duchess and saluted with parade-ground precision. Then, shivering as with intense cold, he got into bed and lay down. All unknown to me, Lady Fortune had dealt me a winning card.

My fellow patient was a huge man almost bursting out, of his shabby prison camp uniform. His large head hung a little forward between massive shoulders, and brown hair bristled up in a straight line across his brow. His nose was thin and Semitic, and deep lines ran down to the thin-lipped mouth. A faint ironic smile, as of a desperately ill man, was lost in a small moustache and pointed beard. With a grim and painful deliberation he slowly moved his head on the pillow, and gave me a careful scrutiny out of feverish eyes. Then, looking away, he yawned and seemed to sink at once into deep slumber.

My thoughts wandered from the book I was reading, and I glanced several times towards the bed at my side. Somewhere, at some time, I knew I had seen that man before. I racked my memory, but failed utterly to place him. That vast head, those dark piercing eyes and heavy powerful shoulders remained tantalisingly familiar. . . . If only I could remember, could seize hold upon the slightest clue. . .

Night had fallen, and the pale lemon-coloured oil lamps dimly illuminated the ward. I was lying, staring idly in front of me, when all at once, quite distinctly, I heard my neighbour whisper my German *Nachrichtendienst* cipher, "O.M.66." After that, like one murmuring in his sleep, the other reminded me of our meeting some months back, at Major von Lauenstein's flat in Berlin,* and in a flash everything became clear to me. He was none other than Private Abraam Rachoulka Portnoy (*alias* Karl Müller), a counter-spy whose pre-War work in Russia was well known to every aspiring secret agent. At the age of seventeen Portnoy was one of the most accomplished smugglers on the Russian-German frontier, and undoubtedly his experience in that most dangerous of trades helped him later on in his daring career as a spy. For many years he successfully carried on

*Other spies present on that occasion were Albrecht von Rheimer, Wentzel Vorlicek, Joseph Sladinka, Herr Doktor Julius Acht, Fraulein Emma Schmiegel ("the Owl"), Fraulein Corolina Zecht ("Mrs. Mortimer M. Mannering") and "Mademoiselle Fichette." It was Herr Doktor Julius Acht who offered to betray the strategical plans concerning every one of the Russian Army Corps stationed near the frontier at five hundred marks per corps. This scheme, incidentally, I was instrumental in forestalling.

his espionage activities, assuming easily a hundred disguises, and when war broke out he joined the German army to facilitate his work. He now told me that at last he had over-reached himself; having been arrested while working in a Russian munition factory close by the Galician front, and interned in a prison camp near St. Petersburg. His illness had then intervened.

But my contact with Private Abraam Portney was most unfortunately cut short. Before I could extract any really helpful information from him, intermediate enteritis set in. His lips turned a dark orange colour, and were flecked with foam, and finally he seemed to relapse into a semi-stupor.

Sleep for me very naturally became an impossibility, and presently getting up from my cot I began hurriedly to pull on my well-worn uniform. Wrapping a blanket around me, I sat down fully dressed by the open window. The ward was very still. From the Russian section at the far end I heard some one cry out in his sleep, asking God if he was ready to open the last gate. Then another man started to croon a regimental song, which died away in a choking yawn. The volunteer night nurse, nervous and distressed, left her chair by the emergency door and went to fetch the young intern.

The air from outside struck unpleasantly chill, and huddled at the window I shivered. Sniffing suddenly, I caught above the odour of disinfectants a whiff of enteric gas from Portnoy's cot, and I glanced quickly in that direction. The sick man's form lay motionless. Had the end already come? Even as I looked, and almost fetching a cry from my lips, a death-bed miracle occurred. Rising on one elbow, Portnoy shook himself as with some mechanical effort and struggled into a sitting position. In the pale shine of the ward lamps his face was ghastly. Saliva was running helplessly from his lips, which were now a purplish hue, and from them came what at first seemed to me an unintelligible muttering.

In my work the study of ciphers and their elucidation were among my strongest points. I had a certain nasural aptitude in that direction. And now, all at once, I perceived that the other's murmurings took the form of a fairly understandable "circular code."* Portnoy spoke in Yiddish,

*The "circular code" is certainly the most difficult code in existence, and is a variation of the German master-spy Stieber's famous "lip and tooth" system, now used, in a very much simplified form, in German prisons. Major von Lauenstein introduced into the "circular code" *double flats* (short pauses) in between *guide words*, which he claimed would baffle any foreign agent. However, in the case of Private Portnoy the Yiddish words were pronounced much more quickly than would be possible with the German language, and of course I had had special instruction in the Polish slum jargon that is used by Jews.

and repeated certain words over and over again. For a space I puzzled ineffectivelly, seeking for some initial clue. Then it struck me that all the vowels in the words used were five in number and consonants twenty—the latter, discounting the purely diaphragmatic rumblings, divided roughly into eleven mutes and fourteen spirants. Fumbling in my pocket for pencil and paper, I put down mutes as flats, nasals as sharps, spirants as flat sharps, and trilled sounds as divided double mutes or pauses; which is the way that a spy, in talking, always pronounces his vowels. Just as the night nurse returned to the ward, in the company of the intern, Portnoy drew a short whistling breath and toppled back on his pillow—dead.

I loosened my uniform, crossed myself, and lay down again upon my cot. In the confusion that followed I had ample time in which to attack the decoding of the jumble of notes that Portnoy's utterance presented. The grammar of the letters, however, had to be supplemented more or less by guesswork. Finally I managed to get the meaning clear, and, thinking of the twenty-six letters of the English alphabet, I translated the Yiddish phrases into English. "Book in bathroom," ran my result.

The position was too critical for me to waste time in communicating with General Batioushin. Quite apart from Portnoy's mysterious message, there had come to me an idea requiring immediate action. What was to prevent me from picking up, there and then, Private Abraam Portnoy's identity, and thereby executing a daring stroke of counter-espionage against the enemy I pretended to serve?

Catching the eye of the young intern as he turned away from the dead man's bed, I motioned him to my side. He was a rather intelligent young man and, what was more, his armlet denoted field service on the German front. Besides the red cross on a pale yellow background, there were two grey cotton chevrons—showing the man came from humble peasant stock. Putting on, therefore, an air of ferocious authority, I ordered him to daub Portnoy's ears, outside and in, with red ink. The intern, after staring with momentary astonishment, gave me a look of respectful understanding and obeyed. His eyes said as plainly as possible "Secret Service!" and in that he was correct. The sign was for the Intelligence agent attached to the hospital morgue, to the effect that another agent was picking up the identity of the dead man and in due course would apply to Headquarters in that respect. The corpse would be quietly disposed of, but the spy would live on—as was often the case.

My next, and equally important step, was to gain access at the earliest opportunity to the Enteric Ward bathroom. There, soon after his arrival at the hospital the previous day, Portnoy must have hidden some vitally important thing. I decided it was in all probability a spy record, or secret instructions issued to German agents. It was then still early morning, and the resident doctor had not yet come round to sign the temperature charts. I could not possibly attempt any move for the time being.

My chance finally presented itself when the attention of the watchful orderlies was distracted by the bustle and confusion of breakfast-time. Slipping away, I gained the bathroom and shut myself inside. There certainly seemed little enough opportunity for concealment in such a place, and after running my eye swiftly over the room I started a systematic search. I went through the medicine chest, and drew blank ; then turned my attention to the electric fixtures on the walls, with like result. The sound of footsteps outside sent my heart into my mouth, and I glanced desperately around. My eye fell upon the little brass grid of the waste-pipe at the bottom of the bath, and with eager fingers I managed to unscrew the slippery thing. Producing my service skeleton master-key (a thin wire hook, which every Russian agent carried in his pocket), I dipped it down into the pipe, and, feeling it catch, gave a sharp upward jerk. A thin roll of green oiled skin, three-quarters of an inch in diameter and about five inches long, came to light, together with a miniature fountain of stale soap-suds and brown disinfectant fluid.

I again heard steps beyond the door, and held my breath. Even a hasty glance at the first page of the little book inside the oiled silk case showed me that I could not hope to decode its contents. I therefore hastily rinsed the bath, carefully hid my precious find inside my tunic, and made my way unconcernedly back to the ward.

Not long afterwards I went to the Military Commander's bureau, and asked for my discharge from the hospital. Colonel Poushkin, always a busy man, signed my papers without asking to see my ward certificate of health. From a public telephone in the General Post Office I then called up my Russian chief and told him briefly of all that had occurred. General Batioushin, as was his way, showed not the slightest trace of excitement or enthusiasm over my report but simply instructed me to send him the code-book as soon as possible by registered post.

For myself, realising that slum hotels were likely to be

somewhat unhealthy for the questionable Colonel Mousin, I secured a room at the St. Andrew Home for destitute gentlefolk.

III

Two days later, after General Batioushin had had time to attend to the matter of Private Portnoy's code-book, I received an order to report to Headquarters.

On arrival, I went through the usual routine. First, I presented my service-card to the senior agent in the hall. The agent, after a long talk over a telephone equipped with a silent glass receiver, conducted me to a small, steel-railed automatic lift. The lift dropped some eighty feet below ground, and I passed along a narrow corridor to " Room 66," which was reserved for first-grade agents engaged on highly secret missions.

" Room 66 " was large, well-lit and electrically ventilated. The polished wood floor was laid on a steel and concrete foundation, and covered with glossy black Dagestan rugs. The walls, also backed by steel and concrete, and sound-proof, were lined with mahogany book-shelves, reaching almost to the vaulted ceiling, and filled with works on a multiplicity of subjects, such as spy methods, prison reform, child prostitution, drugs, fire-arms, criminal argot, suicide, abnormal psychology, masochism, nymphomania, sexual perversion, code writing, ritual flagellation, and the history of Scotland-Yard. The book-cases left only space enough for tables of figures, that served as file-indexes and contained the combination numbers for the enormous bomb-proof safe, standing at the north-west corner of the room. In the safe, among other things, were reports by " D.13," Assistant Chief of the Personal Court Branch, and a master of foreign espionage, who had built up a formidable record-system of foreign spies, docketing over nine hundred names in the space of five years.* There were twenty steel filing-cabinets, with locks protected by high-voltage wires which could be safely opened only by the Chief, General Batioushin, and three or four privileged agents. The files held enlarged photographs of political executions in the Fortress of St. Peter and Paul, and specimens of " full confessions " made by anarchists, social-revolutionary agents, and the like. A maze of telegraph and telephone wires disappeared into semi-opaque glass

* *F-l-a-s-h D.*13.

covers attached to small Medviedeff dynamos of the submarine type. Lastly, at the southern end of the room was a large desk, invariably covered with papers, portfolios, charts, and coloured " flimsies " on which were the reports of agents in Russia and abroad.

Left alone, I patiently awaited developments, and nearly twenty minutes slipped away. Then suddenly the silver death-mask of Cæsar Borgia upon the door coloured with a delicate pink light. The mask was a theatrical whim of the Chief, intended to go with the surroundings. I hooked my fingers into the eye-cavities of the thing, pressed slightly, pulled, and opened a steel panel, revealing six coiled wires that were crackling faintly. My pass-key cut off the current, and very carefully I extracted a small packet in which was Private Abraam Portnoy's little book.

The book had now been decoded, and I sat down and quickly read through the result.* The information I gathered was certainly arresting enough.

In the Ukraine, it seemed, there had come into being an espionage system which represented a truly colossal effort on the part of the German Intelligence Service to penetrate the Russian military zones of the Sea of Azov. In accordance with its essential principles, the German General Staff worked by means of a vast and thoroughly reliable organisation, that had no room for useless hangers-on and revolved with all the strict routine of a high-class business concern.

The organisation's largest unit was that of an agent known as " Dove." On the outbreak of war this agent had set up a spy bureau in Rostoff-on-Don, but later had transferred it to Taganrog, presumably for reasons of safety. The staff of the Taganrog bureau consisted almost entirely of Polish Jews, who, after being trained in Warsaw, arrived in groups and had definite activities systematically assigned to them. Thus, agent " Lion " was instructed to watch the ports of the Sea of Azov for incoming and outgoing ships ; agent " Bear " was responsible for the munition transports ; agent " Tiger " reported the movements of troops—especially newly-formed regiments ; and agent " Lynx " directed the activities of the Russian-born Germans residing in towns close to the Black Sea. A second group, under agent

* Private Portnoy's code-book was first submitted to three experts, Orloff, Sacharoff, and von Stein. After many hours of work the experts reported to General Batioushin that the book could not be decoded, owing to certain intricacies in the sub-divisional " key " words. " D.13," Assistant Chief of the Personal Court Branch, however, decoded the first page in two hours, the entire work being completed in ten hours.

"Wolf," flourished in the Don Basin, while other lesser groups were to be found in Mariupol, Kertch, Berdiansk, and Yeisk.

In the main bureau of the agent "Dove," at Taganrog, the German Intelligence Service had its most important news-collecting centre. It employed over a hundred persons—some of them Russians, and was divided into four departments. The first and largest department controlled naval espionage; the second concerned itself with military aviation matters; the third dealt with the technical side of the whole branch, and provided spies with forged passes and identification papers; the fourth was in close touch with German spies recently arrived in Russia, as for instance Private Abraam Portnoy.

When I had finished reading, I remained for some time staring a little grimly in front of me. It was obvious, apart from the brief remarks scribbled in red ink by the senior decoder, that here was a channel for the leakage of information so unusual and so vital that it must be closed at all costs. The question was—how? I had already conceived the idea of picking up Portnoy's identity, and with that end in view I had taken preliminary steps at the hospital. There now had to be considered what were the chances of Portnoy being already in touch with the Taganrog spy bureau; whether, that being so, I should be able to stand up to any shrewd cross-examination, or, worse still, secret handclasps with graded finger-grips, from his associates; and lastly, whether Portnoy was actually on his way to South Ukraine at the time of his arrest in the neighbourhood of the Galician front.

Machanically I opened the spy's code-book, picked up a magnifying glass used for blurred ruby type, adjusted the sliding lens, and scanned the last mica page. Then, thinking of the German invisible inks, I held the book nearer to a triple-bulbed reading-lamp, which had an intense white glare of its own. As I had hoped and half expected, the steady heat of the powerful electric bulb brought out some lines of fine lemon-and-milk cipher writing. After a struggle with the baffling punctuation, and other peculiarities of the German code, I learned one of the things that it was essential for me to know. Private Portnoy's destination was indeed Taganrog, although his actual mission was not specified. Moreover, I discovered explicit instructions from Major von Lauenstein, to the effect that any attempt on the part of the bearer to communicate with him in Berlin would be punishable by death.

Stepping over to one of the steel filing-cabinets,* I cut off the current and unlocked one of the drawers with my pass-key. Having found the compartment labelled "G.O.L.U.B." ("Dove"), I took out a large blue-green envelope numbered "97. 4. 6." Inside, among a dozen clippings from Ukranian periodicals, was an ironical official report from the Taganrog resident agent, who, answering a recent inquiry by General Batioushin, asserted that the German spy organisation there was no more than a wartime myth. I had closed the file and was standing thinking, when in a moment drama more startling and effective than anything artificially contrived, took command of the situation.

Four clear notes echoed from a concealed wall-gong, which meant that a message of importance had been received in the adjoining telegraph room. Almost immediately six more notes sounded, telling me that I was wanted on the house telephone. I hurried to the instrument and when I put down the receiver I knew the worst. It appeared that the Taganrog Military Governor, General Simeon Djaparidze, had just reported officially that two Polish aviation engineers, Colonel Rogozinsky, had been murdered, and the blue prints of the new Sikorski bombing airplane stolen. The Military Governor suspected a German spy organisation, and asked for immediate help.

On leaving the telephone, I went to see my chief. At the end of a short corridor, I tapped twice on a door of solid oak, reinforced by thick steel bars. The door opened automatically, with a flash of red light from the keyhole, and I walked in. The room was small, very close, and upholstered entirely in grey felt. There were a few good etchings in grey frames, and a grey carpet with a dark grey border of combed silk. General Batioushin was seated behind an old desk, scattered with books and outspread charts. His face was in shadow, but I could hear that calm, measured tapping of his silver pencil; that infernally slow tapping which had once confounded even the Tzar, and prevented a political event of the first magnitude.

I saluted, and stood waiting. The great man grunted a greeting, and then made a vague, uncertain gesture with one thin, blue-veined hand. As briefly as I could, I sketched

*These filing-cabinets were known as *agentúra*, and were used for the reports of undercover agents. Such agents were men whose duty was to keep close at the heels of some suspected person, and never let him out of their sight. Of undercover agents there were more than 800 in Moscow, over 1000 in St. Petersburg, and some 10,000 in the whole of Russia. The chief of these spies was a Swede named Liander, who in February, 1914, was arrested in Stockholm for espionage on behalf of Russia.

out my ideas, and asked that I might board the first train to Taganrog. My request seemed to please General Batioushin greatly, and grunting again in token of assent, he remained for a minute or two in silence. Indeed, nothing more was said until he returned my salute, when with all the force of a sudden explosion there came his famous flow of profanity, which had at times shocked and inspired every agent, undercover "pointer," street observer, courier and master-spy, who had worked under him and knew that he would not send a man where he dared not go himself.

My next visit was to "Room 14," and from there I returned made up as Private Abraam Rachoulka Portnoy. My metamorphosis was practically perfect, and the more so since I never used wigs or theatrical grease-paint. I had also obtained a chlorine powder-gun, and an alkaline protective mask. The chlorine gun was at that time the very latest weapon issued to special agents, and, as the chief chemist attached to my branch explained, quite the most deadly.

One hour later I was eating cabbage soup in the third class dining-room at the Nicholas Station, St. Petersburg. At one end of the baggage platform a bunch of Polish Jews polluted the air; squat, ill-kempt figures in dirty frock-coats and thigh-boots. The women, wearing obvious wigs, sat nursing their drowsy children, while the men stood by, their long, tawny, uncombed hair framing their grimy faces. It occurred to me that here was a heaven-sent opportunity to try out my disguise and, joining them, I said something in Yiddish, imitating the Warsaw jargon. The men answered in a rapid patter of welcome; accepting me as another Yidd, a fellow-countryman with the same smell of herrings and the same abhorrence of water and soap.

At last the train-bell clanged, and I climbed into a third class compartment, assisted by the toe of a gendarme's boot and cursed by a very indignant village priest. I then huddled down on the hard seat, and lit a *papieroské* of newspaper and shag.

"Private Abraam Rachoulka Portnoy's momentous journey to Taganrog had begun.

IV

THREE weeks later I sat at a table in the "Café of The Three Blessed Hands," at Taganrog, and considered the situation. I made no excuses for myself. After a long time spent in the underworld of the city, seeking for some line,

some clue that would bring me into touch with the German spy organisation that was my objective, I was faced with virtual failure. I cursed myself for my foolish confidence in thinking I could successfully play a lone hand at the game. I should have approached the situation very differently, I felt, and now it was too late for regrets.

And yet, at the next moment I wondered, had I been altogether such a fool? My orthodox Jewish disguise, now slightly altered to give the character of Portnoy the definite background of a caviare-dealer, and brought me into touch with all sorts of persons and led me into divers odd places, from questionable houses of pleasure to field hospitals and villas of the rich. I had by degrees amassed driblets of useful information from all manners of sources, and only a few days had chanced upon something which might, I still inclined to believe, be the end of the thread for which I was looking.

I had overheard a stray piece of conversation between two hospital orderlies, in which the name of a certain "Sister Marianna" was mentioned in deferential tones. The sister in question, it seemed, was a Polish nun, who had been recently attached as a volunteer nurse to one of the city hospitals, and she was in the habit of cooking and distributing caviare patties among the wounded in the officers' ward. Most devoutly I wished the good lady divine recompense; at the same time I had an instinctive feeling that in her case the neat white uniform of a nurse might very well be protecting a German spy.

I have already said how that time and again my subconscious reactions have stood me in good stead. But in this instance there was also a practical factor to support my suspicions. Germany, Austria, and Russia all made great use of Poles for espionage purposes, and for the reason that Poland, a subject and oppressed State, was then divided between those three Powers. The Poles, moreover, made good spies; the women especially going to any length in obtaining important data, no matter what their personal feeling.

On the occasion that I first set eyes on Sister Marianna, I understood why she had chosen wartime nursing as one of her religious duties. She belonged to that exceedingly rare type which nurses with imagination, and never gives way to overstrung nerves. In herself, she was not old; but her silver-grey hair and blue-tinted spectacles made her appear twice her age, and then, too, her manners were essentially those of a woman of the world. My calculations as to her

secret activities, however, were distinctly upset upon checking her credentials. I discovered that she had letters of recommendation from various Russian officials, among whom was none other than my own Chief, General Batioushin! While, again, on my going carefully over the entire personnel of the hospital, I could find no traces of spy work there, or of any attempt to obtain information from its inmates.

Sister Marianna de la Colombière a spy? Impossible —or so it seemed.

As, then, I idled over a cup of coffee in "The Three Blessed Hands,"* I attempted to compose my spirits more to surroundings. Like every other Greek café, the place possessed a quaintness of its own, but on that particular grey and rainy evening I had no eye for its peculiar charms. Its bare rosewood benches were stiff-looking and uncomfortable, its smoke-laden atmosphere and unceasing noise drove in upon me with an effect of staleness and irritation; everything there had for me the flavour of tarnished age. So old was the café, I felt, that the ancient Ypsilantis sewers that ran beneath the building's numerous sub-cellars were young in comparison with the carved marble of the wine-fountain and the lyre-shaped fireplace, while the same applied to the oleographs of the Russian Tzars, carefully dusted and sponged, which hung round the black diorite walls. Lastly, the proprietor himself, Gerasimos Koundouris, was a figure in keeping with it all, sitting beneath a triptych of green lacquer saints, looking exactly like a great snow-owl, with tufts of brown-grey hair crowning his large pointed ears.

Happening to glance towards Koundouris again a few minutes later, I surprised his gaze directed with some attention upon myself. His hard, olive-dark face was thrust a little forward; a clay pipe jutted aggressively from between uneven yellow teath; his strong brown hands were gripped fast upon a yellow abacus in front of him; and his whole attitude seemed to imply a resentment of my presence. There could be no doubt about it, something was in the air —something was wrong somewhere. For a minute, instinctively, my brain and my body tensed, and I held myself ready for immediate action.

Yet actually nothing accurred, and the moment passed. And indeed, as I looked about me, I felt that my imagination

*The "Café of the Three Blessed Hands" owed its name to the charming legend of Our Lady of the Red Roses distributing, together with St. Nicholas and St. Pantaleon, blooms to children stricken with the Pest. The wine-cellars of the café were built by Apostolos Komneno-Barbatzi, a notorious Greek pirate, later Peter the Great's most famous naval officer.

must have played me false. Small details of ordinary, harmless café life were to be seen on every side, and refused to associate themselves with any of the more dramatic possibilities of espionage and counter-espionage. Most of the half-sober customers were caviare-hawkers, the fat policeman lolling in the corner of the room was most certainly nothing else, and the stout highly-scented female on my left was a simple, if obvious, procuress.

And then, all at once, for the second time my pulses quickened, and my eyes grew more keenly alert. Yet again it was Koundouris that had aroused me, and now I saw him draping the oleograph pictures of the Tzars with multi-coloured paper flags. That particular evening was the " Green Festival," called locally *Kyrié Eléison*, a traditional event in which the golden wedding-ring and the silver heart of Our Lady of Lavender were offered to the dead of the Azov steppes, and the whole Greek quarter of Taganrog gaily celebrated the occasion. Flags, I reminded myself, would be everywhere in the town ; nevertheless, there was something rather remarkable about the ones in Koundouris' hands, and I speculated eagerly upon their precise origin and significance. In order to be able to watch without attracting notice, I took out a silver *tabakerker* (cigarette case), that was part of my equipment as a prosperous caviare merchant. It was an inconspicious thing, and continual polishing had transformed it into a powerful " spy mirror," with the additional value of a clear and sharp reflection, especially in a strong light.

I saw Koundouris force a small red flag into the thick *papier-mâché* frame of the oleograph nearest to me. The flag itself was triangular in shape, and possessed a thin wire stem that swiftly attracted my attention, and then caused me an excited thrill. In a flash the truth came home to me : the flag's stem was a Heinsel-Raub wire, which when inserted into the wires of a telephone circuit, automatically prevented the instrument from ringing, and, with the current at a short or released stage, rang a similarly equipped telephone in some spy bureau ; incidentlly, without the knowledge of the exchange.*

With my eyes glued on the makeshift mirror in my hand I turned over the clever arrangement in my mind. I saw the Greek fix the remainder of his collection of flags on the kitchen door, and afterwards return to his place under the triptych of the saints. Then, once more rattling the abacus,

* A Heinsel-Raub wire, spiral in form, disconnected the telephone and produced a persistent jingle, hardly audible unless expected.

he looked steadily in my direction, and for me that was perhaps the hardest ordeal of all. There was something sly and calculating, malignant and intensely cunning, in the man's pansy-brown eyes, and his unshaven jaw seemed to jut forward like a solid piece of fossilised bone. I had a strong impulse to get up and leave the table, but taking a grip of myself, I spat unconcernedly and slightly altered my position.

When presently I turned again I saw that the Greek had gone. Had his disappearance something to do with the concealed telephone call? Getting up, I walked casually down the café, and paused outside the door of the private card-room, near the deserted entrance hall. From somewhere close at hand an electric piano began to blare out a popular march, and faintly through the music my ears caught something else. From beyond the closed door of the card-room there came a queer grinding sound as of old iron scraping against stone. I tried the card-room door and, in defiance of strict police regulations, found it locked.

From my breast pocket I took a small service detectascope, equipped with a fish-eye lens of the latest globular type, and with the utmost care inserted the handy little contrivance into a crack, less than a quarter of an inch in diameter, in one of the upper door-panels. I continued to turn the lens until I could see the shadowy outlines of the room within, with a deeper spot of shadow in the centre of the floor. Keeping my hand as steady as possible, I adjusted the double globe refractor to ninety-six degrees, or a little over a quarter of a circle. The result was a table, an open trap-door in the stone floor, and some olegraphs on the walls. Then, at one hundred and ten degrees there sprang into view two figures, grotesquely proportioned owing to the peculiar diminishing property of the refractor. In one of them, however, I recognised Sister Marianna de la Colombière, wearing the uniform of a hospital nurse, and in the other the café proprietor, Gerasimos Koundouris.

I raised the detectascope a trifle, and set the lens at one hundred and twenty-five degrees. I became aware, with that, of something new in Sister Marianna's appearance, something which had come with the removal of a silver-grey wig and blue-tinted spectacles. The next moment I had almost given a cry, recognising in the nurse's now youthful face none other than the unknown woman whom not so very long back I had saved from the St. Petersburg Political Police. In her hand she held a thick square envelope, of the official type belonging to the Russian air force, and which

presumably contained the stolen blue prints of the Sikorski bombing airplane.

I saw Koundouris' eyes fixed on the envelope with an expression of malicious triumph, and taking a hasty step backwards, I hurled myself against the door and broke with a splintering crash into the card-room. I stumbled upon my knees, and as I rose the spies were clambering down out of sight through the trap-door. There was a flash and the explosion of a heavy automatic rang out, and the familiar sound had a bracing effect on my nerves. I fired swiftly, without taking aim, and followed in pursuit.

The first few steps down through the trap showed nothing but after suddenly tripping over a piece of iron and staggering into a pile of loose stones, I realised that the two spies, who were some distance ahead of me, had chosen the ancient canal of the condemned Ypsilantis sewers as the only possible way of escape to the deserted sand-dunes a mile from the Azov sea. For several moments I did nothing but dart from excavation to excavation, following the gun flashes that showed like bursting red flowers in some insane dream.

I began to run, and as my eyes grew more accustomed to the obscurity, I seemed to stare into a nightmare world. The roof of that subterranean route was unutterably, inconceivably black. Everything appeared monstrously foreshortened and distorted ; a confusion of pipes and scaffolding, sand-heaps and fungoids dripping stench and slime, all rushed by in a wild phantasmagoria. It was the main canal of the sewers ; a place where, legend has it, dark deeds were once performed of horror and human sacrifice.* As I entered the passage, which was half full of dead air, the spies were disappearing behind what appeared to be a great mound of sand, and the next minute, fetching from me a shout of terror my feet stepped into space and I dropped.

I hit the stagnant water of a drainage pool with a terrific splash, and sank like a stone, my lungs bursting with the strain. Then, ever so slowly, I began to rise, and on reaching the weedy surface I struck out silently and by good fortune in a single stroke gained a rough stone step. Clinging there, I cared not whether I made a good target for a bullet, so long as I might draw breath and feel the foul air upon my face. A dangerous but wholly soothing lassitude from the sewer gas had begun to creep over me, when a reviving draught from an invisible ventilation shaft reached me, carrying with it the sound of hurriedly retreating footsteps.

In the end I managed to pull myself up out of the water,

and was standing with waves of nausea driving the effect of the fumes from my brain, when suddenly I heard a woman's voice calling ahead of me. It came to me quite clearly, like the shout of a mountaineer echoing over a chasm, but I was unable to distinguish any words. Motionless, I waited, but there was nothing further, and the silence was absolute. Several times I attempted to make my way down, the slippery track by which the spies had disappeared but my nerve failed me and I simply could not go on.

How long I remained there hesitating I had no idea, but at last all of a sudden I caught the unmistakable grinding sound of a sewer door being loosed from its iron socket, and the next moment a cry of stark and mortal fear rang out, ending in a wail of intense physical pain. The truth flashed upon me. The two spies, in trying to reach the sand-dunes and the sea, had opened the wrong door and released the overflow from the new city sewers that ran parallel with the old.

I blundered against a damp wall, and at first thought that my progress was barred. But after groping a little, my hands found the turn in the passage, and once more I pressed on, until I was brought up short with a gasp of sheer animal fright. I seemed to be on a brick ledge, and in front of me torrents of brown filth were half obscuring a lonely stretch of sand-dunes and the open sea.

I stood, to be exact, just behind a primitive sewage-door, swinging open on rust-red hinges, and on a brick ledge wet and slippery with thrown-up refuse. Twenty feet below me a foaming deluge cataracted into a rock-hewn basin, where it reared and lashed itself against the moss-grown sides. The air was close and foul, and I drew on my alkaline protective mask.

My flashlight sent its yellow beam into the greenish mist that filled the basin ; a weird, fantastic mist, shot through and through with expanding corpse-blue spots. And then, sending cold sweat trickling down my chin beneath the rubber pads of the mask, from somewhere out of that obscene inferno at my feet I heard a human voice crying : the screams of a woman in mortal pain.

I made out, with a thrill of horror, the figures of the spies, limp like a couple of broken marionettes, caught by the barbed wall-hooks of the sewage basin. The hooks, presumably, had seized them both beneath the knees, and, being specially fashioned to hold carrion flesh, had been no doubt driven by the pressure of the torrent through skin and bone.

Suddenly an ominous rumble arose from the bottom of the basin, and the gaseous mist swirled upwards towards the sewer-roof, arching blackly overhead. Glancing hurriedly around, I located the stone steps of the garbage-platform, and, venturing cautiously down them, managed to reach the two doomed figures. The woman who called herself Sister Marianna was still alive, but the Greek, Koundouris, was horribly mutilated and quite dead. The woman's eyes, hooded by splashes of mud, flickered up into mine, and for a moment there flamed in them a light like that of a falcon's pride. But, then, she was more than a mere spy: in her way she was also a patriot.

I extinguished my torch, and Sister Marianna's hand, cold and already stiffening, touched my own. I felt a thick envelope between my fingers, and caught the faint whisper of my German cipher. Then Sister Marianna told me her real name—Anna von Wentz—adding that her agent, Gerasimos Koundouris, was the murderer of the Polish aviation engineers. I was on the point of offering my chlorine powder-gun, but death had already put an end to the woman's sufferings.

I hurried back up the steps, only too well aware of the danger in which I also stood. Running into a narrow passageway, I hurled myself into a dry garbage-chute, and shot downwards out on to a sloping sand-dune amid the fresh air. I was racing towards a coastguard station situated a little distance off along the shore, when, with a tremendous crash, the left wing of the new city sewers collapsed in a welter of masonry, iron and splintered wood.

What followed was like a dream. Red torches were dancing all about me and, after being hurried into a high-powered police car, I was driven post-haste into Taganrog. I was taken into the presence of the Military Governor of the town, General Simeon Djaparidze, who signed my report and inquired if I had succeeded in my mission. For answer I produced the wet and crumpled envelope handed me by "Sister Marianna," and laid the stolen blue prints of the Sikorski machine on the Governor's table. General Djaparidze, a cast-iron martinet of the old school, held the precious plans for a minute without speaking, and then silently made in front of him the sign of the cross. The gesture, as the General afterwards explained, was meant as a little tribute to an agent who had blindly ventured into the Ypsilantis sewers and made good.

THE WOMAN WITHOUT FEAR

By

S. T. FELSTEAD

The Abbé de Moor, a British agent operating on the Dutch frontier, tells the story of Louise de Bettignies, a woman who rendered invaluable service to the Allies.

SHORTLY after a disaster in Ghent which had resulted in the disappearance of a valuable organisation, my colleague Edouard Jacobs had news brought to him of a mysterious woman who had been moving along the frontier seeking some one to take her across.

It was now September, 1915, with things getting worse every day. The wary smugglers who worked for me would have nothing to do with the woman and believed her to be a spy who would certainly bring them to their death.

I had gone to a café inside the Dutch border hoping to meet an Alsatian who could speak to the German sentries in their own language, luring them on one side while a spy was smuggled over. Rain was falling outside, and I waited late into the night in the squalid café, hoping I should not have to seek my man in the sodden woods.

Suddenly the door opened with a crash and the two men who were with me precipitately jumped through the back window. Hastily lowering the lamp, I looked into the front room and saw a woman standing with her back to me. Imagine my astonishment, when I got the opportunity of looking at her face, to recognise in her the young lady who had spoken to me on the boat from Tilbury to Flushing a few months previously!

German spy! flashed through my mind. I silently crept through the back window myself, walked round to the front of the café, and went in as though I had just arrived. Sitting down, I ordered myself a glass of beer and the proprietor, playing his part nobly, gave me a significant wink. "And what the deuce do you want?" I said to myself, eyeing the lady up ad down.

She looked at me frankly enough, then smiled slightly. Then, to my astonishment she came over to my table, put out her hand and said, "Good-evening, Monsieur Marcel."

"You here, madame!" exclaimed I. "How do you come to know my name?"

"From Folkestone," she said quietly—if rather to my dismay. "I have authority to turn to you in case of difficulty."

"And what is *your* name?" I demanded with great emphasis.

"Louise."

"Louise what?" I asked, beginning to grow annoyed.

"S-s-sh, not so loud, please." Softly, sitting down beside me, she told me she was Louise de Bettignies, Mahillon 100. "That's an old number, isn't it? Oh," she continued earnestly, "I'm so glad I've found you. I can't get across the frontier; no one will have anything to do with me. This is the fifth time I've been in this café looking for some one."

No need for me to eulogise the fame of Louise de Bettignies! Times without number had she made daring trips into the occupied territory, worming out secrets which only a woman could discover. Folkestone, I knew, placed tremendous value on her—so did I. One felt thrilled at meeting such a courageous woman.

"Come into the back room," I suggested. "You shall meet some of the men who may take you across." I relit the petrol lamp and whistled; my assistants climbed back one by one and were introduced to Louise. Her mission was no business of ours.

Then my Alsatian friend came in; he eyed Louise up and down and then made it known that he could, if urgently wanted, get her safely across that very evening.

"You will go to-night, mademoiselle?" he queried.

"The sooner the better," she replied. And that was the last I ever saw of her. Some weeks passed by and then Folkestone began to grow anxious. "Evelyn," my Chief, wrote urgent messages requesting me to make the fullest inquiries as to whether she had fallen into the enemy's hands. Alas, it proved all too true. Towards the end of October, recklessly moving about the country in the region of Tournai without a proper identity card, she had been challenged by two of the secret police, after which all trace of her was lost.

I could only report to Folkestone that she must be numbered amongst the missing. Short of a miracle her life was forfeit.

. . . .

"Mahillon 100" had been one of "Evelyn's" most trusted spies, and also one of the first. She had come into contact with our secret service in the early days of the war.

A refugee from the occupied country, she was passing through the barrier of Intelligence officers at Folkestone when it occurred to some one, so clearly did she answer questions about the things she had seen when the Germans occupied Lille, that she might be useful in the secret service.

To find a woman who spoke French, German and English, as well as Italian, who was willing to work for the Allied cause, was a chance not to be missed. She was a lady by birth, highly intelligent—very nearly the ideal spy. Her *nom-de-guerre* was to be "Alice Dubois."

. . . .

When she reappeared at her home in Lille it was as though a ghost had come to life. However, for the time being she said nothing about the mission on which she was now engaged; her first purpose was to enlist a chain of sub-agents who were also willing to carry out espionage.

Quickly she scouted amongst her friends, and in the course of a few weeks there were watchers everywhere; troop trains were spied upon, artillery batteries marked down, aviation camps noted, even the conversation of the German soldiers carefully noted and passed on.

The real problem, of course, was to get the messages across the Dutch frontier. Here she was lucky; she fell in with one of those sturdy Flemings who delighted in doing a little smuggling in the days when the "octroi" was a well-known feature of every French city. This man's name was Victor Viaene; he came from the Belgian town of Mouscron, right in the front line area.

But the more Louise became involved in spying, the more she realised that she must have a trusted assistant—and a woman for preference. One of her good friends in Lille, the wealthy Madame Paul Masurel, rendered invaluable assistance.

One by one the collaborators were enrolled. A husband and wife in Mouscron, the de Geyters, volunteered to fabricate documents and copy messages in secret ink.

They used the house of a rich manufacturer, Louis Sion by name, as a meeting-place. There she met the girl with whom her name is permanently linked, Léonie Vanhoutte, a frail little Belgian who worked in a shop in Roubaix. She was a quiet shrinking creature with luminous eyes which looked at you steadfastly. You would never have suspected that behind her modest exterior she had the courage of a lion.

It was the shrewd Madame Masurel who brought the two girls together. They talked for some time and Louise

explained all that had to be done. Léonie asked nothing better: eagerly she became a spy in the secret service—some one whose life would now be at stake every hour of the day and night. Léonie Vanhoutte had vanished; she would henceforth be known as "Charlotte."

. . . .

Louise was daring to the verge of recklessness. She took malicious delight in shoving a forged identity card under the nose of a suspicious sentry and asking him in German if he thought the photograph was a good one. Another trick was to carry half a dozen parcels around with her, merely to distract attention. Probably she had concealed about her person at the same time as many reports written in secret ink, the discovery of any of which would have brought her before a firing-party. But as Louise volubly chattered away to the female searcher, the possibility of her being a spy was never considered.

Death lurked at her elbow all the time. She took terrible risks, moving about the country one day as a peasant woman travelling to market, the next day as a dressmaker going somewhere in search of work. Occasionally she came in to Brussels herself, picked up a parcel of our "Libre Belgique" and boldly carried them out of the city for distribution in the war zone.

She was caught at Brussels one afternoon, having just come from Lille with a parcel of clothing—and a batch of reports hidden in her bag. One of the secret police at the barrier eyed her suspiciously, and not being satisfied about the necessity of having sewing done so far away, escorted her to an office on the station.

Louise wept copiously, begging that they would not ruin her work. All in vain. "Where are you going? Why should you come to Brussels? You must be a spy," they growled at her. While the tears continued to flow, the Germans pulled the needlework to pieces, raked her unmercifully with questions, and then allowed her to go on her way, satisfied that so pathetic a woman could not possibly be dangerous. Tremblingly she gathered up her belongings and walked out; they had not even thought of glancing inside the bag.

Once she was caught red-handed with a mass of incriminating material which the Germans thought was hidden in a fine succulent *saucisse de jambon*, that delicacy known to all visitors to Brussels. So with true German thoroughness they cut it to pieces, found nothing, and then let her go. Louise courteously handed over a few slices before departing and

then got into the farmer's cart waiting outside—where the reports were concealed.

It was all very risky—merely a matter of time before she would fall. Hiding the reports invited trouble; she realised the wisdom of carrying them around more or less openly, so that she could destroy them as soon as danger threatened. A piece of paper hidden in her corset or shoes, familiar trick of all spies, was damning evidence once it came to light. But her frequent crossings of the frontier soon made her a marked woman.

. . . .

The Germans heard the name "Alice Dubois" so often that orders came from Brussels to have this troublesome woman laid by the heels at all costs. But it was Léonie Vanhoutte who fell into their clutches first.

Poor little "Charlotte" had come into Brussels, where she and "Alice" were in the habit of staying, to find two letters awaiting her. One was from "Alice," written from Holland; the other requested her to meet some one who called himself "Alexander" at a café facing the Gare du Nord. "Charlotte" knew of a courier of that name who was being brought into the service, but her intuition told her there was something wrong. She smelt a trap; and it was in no enviable frame of mind that she awaited the coming of Victor Viaene.

"Nonsense!" He tried to pooh-pooh any suggestion of danger. "You're getting frightened, mademoiselle."

"Charlotte" refused to be comforted in spite of the fact that other people to whom she mentioned the letter urged her not to worry. Unwillingly she went to the brightly-lit café. Victor accompanied her as far as the door, anxious to see what would happen.

Alas, "Charlotte's" premonitions were all too well-founded. No sooner had she entered than a couple of men eyed her with intense interest. One of them approached her as she timidly sat down and in a voice of suspicious refinement said, "Alexander has asked me to see you, mademoiselle. It was too risky for him to come personally."

"Charlotte" looked at him with no friendly gaze; he didn't ring true. Nor was his ingratiating smile any better. However, if caught she was, she might still bluff her way out. The plucky little girl, with her heart thumping a refrain to "keep cool, keep cool," followed the man back to his own table; she could now definitely sense being inside the trap.

She refused the drink they offered her; she wanted all her wits about her. Conversation proceeded desultorily; the

men tried to pump her, but with little or no success. Any doubt she may have possessed about being a prisoner vanished at a surreptitious glance thrown her by the stout lady behind the counter ; just a flicker of the eyelids, but enough to tell the trembling " Charlotte " she was now in the hands of the German police.

" Have you any reports to send to Holland, Mademoiselle ? " asked one.

" Charlotte " kept her wits about her. " Reports ! " she demanded. " I know nothing of such things. I thought you were the person who might get me over to Holland."

They continued to play with her, and then, on the girl's plea that the noise and the smoke in the café made her unwell, allowed her to go. On the morrow, at a certain address in Brussels, she could ascertain whether it would be possible to get her across the frontier.

" Charlotte " thankfully escaped, and guessed she would be followed. She gave the waiting Victor a slight signal to keep clear ; he trailed her around Brussels for an hour and then, finding a place where they might talk safely, asked her what had happened.

" It is all up," were her first words. " Those men were German police."

" There you are again," retorted the optimistic Victor. " You see a German in every shadow." But it was in a state of apprehension that she returned to her lodgings in Brussels, hardly knowing what to do. She might have made her escape somewhere ; there were a dozen people in the city who would gladly have given her refuge. But hoping against hope, she undressed herself and tried to sleep.

In the early hours of the morning, just when she had succeeded in dropping off, she heard her door open. Some one flashed a light on her bed, and a voice—that of one of the men she had encountered the night before—roughly ordered her to get up and dress. She protested against doing so in front of him, an objection which aroused much mirth. Eventually the landlady was brought and poor " Charlotte," feeling more miserable than she had ever been in her life before, was then taken downstairs where a motor-car was waiting to drive her to St. Gilles.

She was pushed into a cell, praying that they would not subject her to such a search as would reveal a tiny piece of paper hidden in her corsets. Happily they left her alone for a time ; she got the fatal paper out, swallowed it, and prepared to face the future with a slightly better outlook.

For two or three weeks they subjected her to unending

ordeals; she found herself face to face with the real Alexander, who had also been captured. He, at any rate, was guiltless of any betrayal; with true Flemish obstinacy he swore to the Germans that "Charlotte" was totally unknown to him.

Nevertheless, the net was closing round them. "Charlotte" was taken to Antwerp, presumably to get her identified by some one. Then, to make matters worse, she was called before the examiner one afternoon, who without any preamble, thrust a photograph at her, asking harshly, "Do you know this woman?" Poor "Charlotte" nearly fainted; it was the picture of Louise de Bettignies. Still, her self-possession did not desert her; in a faint voice she said she had no idea who it was.

"No?" the German said sarcastically. "Perhaps you will change your mind before long. We are going to take you back to St. Gilles."

. . . .

It is quite certain they did not know actually where "Alice" was, and as it turned out she solved the problem for them by her own recklessness.

She had returned to the Lille district early in September, continuing her operations with a feeling that she, too, would soon encounter disaster. Her fellow-workers were also beginning to grow apprehensive, and continually begged her to exercise more care. But she was now in a state of defiance engendered by overwrought nerves. If she thought trouble would come, she refused to acknowledge it.

She had in her possession some important information which she was anxious to get into Holland. Her various identity cards had gradually disappeared, and, faced with the difficulty of moving across country, she called upon her friend, Ernest Lamotte, a Mouscron merchant, to evolve some scheme which would get her through Tournai. Too well did she realise the danger of a suspected woman travelling alone.

Lamotte arranged with a young girl living in the neighbourhood, Margaret le François, to take her shopping into Tournai, but made no mention that he would be picking up en route the badly-wanted "Alice Dubois." The real danger was that he had only been able to procure one passport for the pair of them.

All went well at first; "Alice," like a total stranger, hailed him on the road and asked for a lift into Tournai. The trio had some conversation together, then "Alice," assuming great surprise, exclaimed that she had left her *carte d'identité* behind. Innocent little Margaret offered the

She heard the door open. Some one flashed a light on her bed, and a voice—that of the man she had encountered the night before—roughly ordered her to get up and dress.

one she had been provided with ; "Alice," greatly astonished, expected Lamotte to produce one for her. But the latter said nothing beyond asking her what she would do.

Dismay is hardly the word to describe "Alice's" feelings. "Never mind," she replied at last. "I'll have to do what I've so often done before." Times without number had she and "Charlotte" run the gauntlet with one *carte* between them, it being a matter of no great difficulty for one of them to hang behind and have the *carte* passed back by a convenient bystander.

They reached the barrier at the gateway to Tournai. Lamotte passed to "Alice" a small piece of paper containing the intelligence she wanted to reach the agent in Holland. The soldier on duty had no suspicions of them. "Alice" took the *carte* first, made a few laughing remarks to the man, and safely passed through. A small boy hanging around volunteered to carry the *carte* back to Margaret waiting in Lamotte's cart, and in a minute or two the girls, flushed with excitement, were walking towards Tournai.

Laughing gleefully, they took no notice of a couple of strangers who approached them. It may have been their hilarity which annoyed the two men ; or who knows whether they were not shrewd enough to suspect that some little trick had just been played on the stolid sentry. Whatever the reason, "Alice" was dumbfounded when one of the men walked straight up to her and harshly ordered her to show her papers.

"But we have just shown them at the barrier."

"I want to see them again."

"Alice" foolishly lost her temper and demanded to know who they were.

"We are German police," said the man grimly. "Come on, let's have a look at your papers." There was no help for it. "Alice" produced one *carte*, while the now white-faced Margaret pretended to search her bag, the man gazing on with sour amusement. Then he and his companion bundled them back along the road to the guard-house, where he locked them up until he could communicate with his superior in Tournai.

For Margaret the prospect was terrifying, if not particularly serious. But for "Alice" it meant death ; hidden away she had the slip of paper intended for Holland.

Before the Germans had time to search her, she succeeded in swallowing it. But a man outside, washing himself in a bucket of water, saw her put something to her mouth and gave the alarm.

In the midst of the terrific turmoil that ensued a car drove up; out of it tumbled a couple of the police from Tournai. "Alice" was searched to the skin and then, accompanied by Margaret and the dismayed Lamotte, taken into Tournai to be put through a proper interrogation.

It was Lamotte who temporarily saved the situation. Seated in a room with an open door, he saw a woman whom the Germans had enticed into their employ, one of those infamous creatures who were in turn stool-pigeon, *agent provocateur* and searcher, mixing something in a cup which Lamotte instantly divined to be an emetic. No words were spoken; but Lamotte, catching "Alice's" eye, made a sign of drinking and shook his head energetically. "Alice" nodded comprehension.

The woman came in to "Alice" and with a false smile, holding out the cup, asked her if she would not like a drink. "Alice" gave her an emphatic "No." The renegade persisted; "Alice" said she wasn't thirsty, though her tongue almost stuck to the roof of her mouth.

The detective in charge of them roughly ordered her to drink from the cup, catching hold of it and attempting to pour the contents down her mouth. She shut her lips, and when he caught hold of her she knocked the cup flying.

Not to be beaten, they brought in a local chemist. But he was a good patriot, this *apotheke*; as soon as he realised the situation he gave "Alice" a significant glance, as though to say she could trust him. Under the eyes of the Germans he mixed another emetic; "Alice" put it down—where it remained, as did the fatal message. Short of killing the girl or using even more drastic measures, that particular piece of evidence had been disposed of.

. . . .

Lamotte was sent home, as was Margaret. To test "Alice's" story of being a dressmaker she was taken back to the de Geyters' house at Mouscron. They did the only thing that was possible in the tragic circumstances—denied all knowledge of her. "Alice" herself had insisted on any one who fell into the enemy's hands maintaining silence.

The malicious detective said, "So, mademoiselle, your story is false. These people do not know you after all."

"Very well," retorted the girl, "then I must be mistaken." It was lucky the de Geyters had already received warning of her arrest; there had been time to destroy a mass of incriminating documents hidden in the house. The visitors ransacked the place from cellar to ceiling, but found nothing of much moment.

"Alice" was now completely trapped. As she realised it, her courage returned, and when the time came for her to be taken to Brussels she had recovered much of her customary self-possession.

"Charlotte" had been in St. Gilles the better part of a month, hardly knowing what would happen to her. The Germans suspected her connection with the elusive "Alice," but had no definite proof. However, one afternoon while poor "Charlotte" was dismally sitting in her cell the prey of the most miserable feelings imaginable, the door opened and there walked in the man she had come to dread—Goldschmidt, the inquisitor-in-chief. But it was the sight of his companion that made "Charlotte" jump to her feet astounded—"Alice," whom she had given up for lost.

Goldschmidt grinned, much enjoying the situation. "I'm sure you two ladies would like to meet each other again," he remarked. "It must be quite a long time since you met."

There was a blank silence; the two girls gazed at each other.

"Come on," said Goldschmidt, "don't stand looking like that. You know her, don't you?" he asked "Alice."

"No, I've never seen her before."

Goldschmidt began to get angry. "Don't bother lying," he growled. "You're the two we've been hearing about this long time. Let me see you shake hands."

"You are mistaken, monsieur," said "Alice" firmly. "This lady is a total stranger to me."

"And you?" turning to "Charlotte." "Have you seen her before?"

"Not until she entered that door," countered "Charlotte."

"All right, that will do for the time being," Goldschmidt said. He took "Alice" out, leaving "Charlotte" wondering what the next move would be.

They went through the same procedure that hundreds of other prisoners of the great invasion had gone; endless questioning, countless traps set for the purpose of making them betray their relationship. They were wheedled with the old, old story of "tell everything and your life shall be spared."

And then when all these ruses had failed, their captors fell back on that stratagem which they found so successful when opposed to obstinate silence—the stool-pigeon. That infamous woman whose nickname was "Big Bertha" volunteered to occupy half "Alice's" cell and see if a tale of

fellow-suffering could achieve what *force majeure* had been unable to accomplish.

She was an astonishing mixture, this creature who had purchased semi-freedom in exchange for the lives of her countrywomen. It seemed impossible that this illiterate peasant woman could also be an accomplished actress, capable of deceiving intelligent, well-educated women such as Louise de Bettignies.

Nevertheless, from the moment she was thrust into "Alice's" cell she played her part with diabolical cleverness. Day after day, simulating tears and despair in a fashion that moved "Alice" to the deepest compassion, she told stories of the cruelties to which she had been subjected, of how, refusing to speak, she had been mercilessly beaten until she felt she could stand the strain no longer.

But her curiosity should have put "Alice" on guard. The renegade knew that her companion was accused of espionage, and professed the greatest admiration for her courage. One afternoon, returning from an alleged dose of third-degree in the office, she remarked, "There is another spy next door, mademoiselle. Over the door I have seen the notice 'Dangerous person.'"

"Who could it be?" asked "Alice," failing to see the trap.

"One can find out," the stool-pigeon replied. "Don't you know that it is possible to speak along the hot-water pipes?"

Such a means of communication was now commonly used among the prisoners who crowded St. Gilles. But the Germans knew it, as well as their captives.

"Alice," harbouring no suspicion of the trap she was falling into, eagerly knelt down, rapped two or three times on the heated pipe; to her intense excitement there came a reply.

"Speak," ordered the woman behind her. "Alice" did as she was bade: her whole being thrilled when there came back a voice which was unmistakably "Charlotte's." As well, perhaps, that she could not see the face of the treacherous "Big Bertha." But as the pair of them talked and comforted each other as best they could, they were sublimely innocent how all their precautions were now being destroyed by themselves.

With calculated cunning their captors kept them in their cells for month after month. Christmas came and still they had not been brought to trial. And all this time "Alice" had imprudently told her cell companion many secrets that were

duly passed on to the highly-satisfied Goldschmidt. He wanted the whole band.

But "Alice" kept silent about her helpers in Lille, Mouscron and many other parts of the country. Death she would face alone.

The raid on the house where "Charlotte" had been taken the previous September had yielded enough proofs to have the two girls shot. As one piece of evidence came to light after another, poor "Alice's" resistance, long at breaking-point, began to weaken.

"Tell me all," persisted her inquisitor, "and your companion shall be saved." "Alice" came to the conclusion that it was at least worth trying. So at last, with many a prayer for forgiveness, she gave the Germans the one admission they wanted—complicity.

This was after five months in a prison cell, five long, weary, agonising months made worse by no change of clothing, no indication when the ordeal would come to an end. Once the fatal confession had become theirs, the Germans lost no time in profiting by it. "Charlotte" was brought in; Goldschmidt in great triumph exclaimed, "She has admitted all. Now you will tell us the truth."

"Charlotte" looked at her friend; "Alice's" mortified face showed all too plainly that for once Goldschmidt was not bluffing. The two girls went back to their cells, hoping they would now be left in peace. Vain hope! For the next week or two the industrious examiner was busy preparing his case for the courts; he must have full confessions of guilt.

But although he made them inculpate each other beyond all redemption, they gave no names away. Goldschmidt stormed, bullied, badgered; he could not induce "Alice" to admit anything beyond being an insignificant member of the British Secret Service.

"You were employed by Major Cameron, mademoiselle?" he inquired suavely.

"I do not know," retorted "Alice."

"You have met many English agents in Holland?"

"Possibly; I have already told you that I crossed the frontier many times."

"Would you care to tell us what you know of the English organisation in Holland; it may be worth your while."

"You waste your time," replied the girl coldly. "I have already said I shall give no one away. You must find your own victims."

It was nearly six months after her capture that she and "Charlotte" were conducted to the Senate House to be

tried. Neither of them had any illusions about their fate; their gaolers had frequently, with grim realism, gone through an imitation of shooting.

But the trial of these two little heroines was notable for the presence of his Excellency Freiherr von Bissing, that grim, gaunt old man whose name was a byword to the Belgian people for all that typified implacable militarism. Who knows what emotions stirred the breast of this legendary old warrior, already a dying man? He must have felt the pathos, the uselessness of it all.

He sat in solitary state, high above the court martial, and when Louise de Bettignies had been sentenced to death he said she should not die. Her punishment would be commuted, and she would go with Léonie Vanhoutte to a long term of imprisonment in Germany.

But, in Louise's case it proved the end of her ill-starred life. At Siegburg prison she contracted a malady brought on by those terrible nights crossing the frontier. It is possible the prison staff were not disposed to be particularly merciful towards her; she had been the ringleader of a mutiny which arose over an attempt to compel the prisoners to make munitions. Despairing of having the all-necessary operation performed in a proper hospital, the unfortunate girl signed a paper agreeing for it to be done inside the prison.

In August, 1918, when it became obvious that she would die, she was removed to Cologne. There her grave was found when the Allied armies entered the city the following November. Next year her body was taken back to her native land and accorded a national funeral.

ONE OF THE CROWD

By

SIR PAUL DUKES

THE snow glittered brilliantly in the frosty sunshine on the afternoon of March 11, 1917. The Nevsky Prospect was almost deserted. The air was tense with excitement and it seemed as if from the girdling faubourgs of the beautiful city of Peter the Great rose a low, muffled rumbling as of many voices. Angry, passionate voices, rolling like distant thunder, while in the heart of the city all was still and quiet. A mounted patrol stood here or there, or paced the street with measured step. There were bloodstains on the white snow, and from the upper end of the Prospect still resounded the intermittent crack of rifles.

How still those corpses lay over there ! Their teeth grinned ghastily. Who were they and how did they die ? Who knew or cared ? Perhaps a mother, a wife. . . . The fighting was in the early morning. A crowd—a cry—a command—a volley—panic—an empty street—silence—and a little group of corpses, hideous, motionless in the cold sunshine !

Stretched across the wide roadway lay a cordon of police disguised as soldiers, prostrate, firing at intervals. The disguise was an attempt to deceive, for it was known that the soldiers sided with the people. " It is coming," I found myself repeating mechanically, over and over again, and picturing a great cataclysm, terrible and overwhelming, yet passionately hoped for. " It is coming, any time now—to-morrow—the day after——"

What a day the morrow was ! I saw the first revolutionary regiments come out and witnessed the sacking of the arsenal by the infuriated mob. Over the river the soldiers were breaking into the Kresty Prison. Crushing throngs surged round the Duma building at the Tauride Palace, and towards evening, after the Tsarist police had been scattered in the Nevsky Prospect, there rose a mighty murmur, whispered in awe on a million lips, " *Revolution* ! " A new era was to open. The revolution, so thought I, would be the Declaration of Independence of Russia ! In my imagination I figured to myself a huge pendulum, weighted with the pent-up miseries and woes of a hundred and eighty millions of people, which

had suddenly been set in motion. How far would it swing? How many times? When and where would it come to rest, its vast hidden store of energy expended?

Late that night I stood outside the Tauride Palace, which had become the centre of the revolution. No one was admitted through the great gates without a pass. I sought a place midway between the gates and, when no one was looking, scrambled up, dropped over the railings, and ran through the bushes straight to the main porch. Here I soon met folk I knew—comrades of student days, revolutionists. What a spectacle within the palace, lately so still and dignified! Tired soldiers lay sleeping in heaps in every hall and corridor. The vaulted lobby, where Duma members had flirted silently, was packed almost to the roof with all manner of truck, baggage, arms, and ammunition. All night long and the next I laboured with the revulutionists to turn the Tauride Palace into a revolutionary arsenal.

Thus began the revolution. And after? Every one knows now how the hopes of freedom were blighted. Truly had Russia's foe, Germany, who despatched the proletarian dictator Lenin and his satellites to Russia, discovered the Achilles' heel of the Russian revolution. Every one now knows how the flowers of the revolution withered under the blast of the Class War, and how Russia was replunged into starvation and serfdom. I will not dwell on these things. My story relates to the time when they were already cruel realities.

My reminiscences of the first year of Bolshevik administration are jumbled into a kaleidoscopic panorama of impressions gained while journeying from city to city, sometimes crouched in the corner of crowded box-cars, sometimes travelling in comfort, sometimes riding on the steps, and sometimes on the roofs or buffers. I was nominally in the service of the British Foreign Office, but the Anglo-Russian Commission (of which I was a member) having quit Russia, I attached myself to the American Y.M.C.A., doing relief work. A year after the revolution I found myself in the eastern city of Samara, training a detachment of Boy Scouts. As the snows of winter melted and the spring sunshine shed joy and cheerfulness around, I held my parades and together with my American colleagues organised outings and sports. The new proletarian lawgivers eyed our manœuvres askance but were too preoccupied in dispossessing the "bourgeoisie" to devote serious attention to the "counter revolutionary" scouts, however pronounced the anti-Bolshevik sympathies of the latter. "Be prepared!" the Scouts would cry, greeting

each other in the street. And the answer, " Always prepared ! " had a deep significance, intensified by their boyish enthusiasm.

Then one day, when in Moscow, I was handed an unexpected telegram. " Urgent "—from the British Foreign Office. " You are wanted at once in London," it ran. I set out for Archangel without delay. Moscow, with its turbulences, its political wranglings, its increasing hunger, its counter-revolutionary conspiracies, with Count Mirbach and his German designs, was left behind. Like a bombshell followed the news that Mirbach was murdered. Leaning over the side of the White Sea steamer, a thousand kilometres from Moscow, I cursed my luck that I was not in the capital. I stood and watched the sun dip low to the horizon ; hover, an oval mass of fire, on the edge of the blazing sea ; merge with the water ; and, without disappearing, mount again to celebrate the triumph over darkness of the nightless Arctic summer. Then, Murmansk and perpetual day, a destroyer to Petchenga, a tug to the Norwegian frontier, a ten-day journey round the North Cape and by the fairyland of Norwegian fjords to Bergen, with finally a zigzag course across the North Sea, dodging submarines, to Scotland.

At Aberdeen the control officer had received orders to pass me through by the first train to London. At King's Cross a car was waiting, and knowing neither my destination nor the cause of my recall I was driven to a building in a side street in the vicinity of Trafalgar Square. " This way," said the chauffeur, leaving the car. The chauffeur had a face like a mask. We entered the building and the elevator whisked us to the top floor, above which additional superstructures had been built for war emergency offices.

I had always associated rabbit-warrens with subterranean abodes, but here in this building I discovered a maze of rabbit-burrow-like passages, corridors, nooks, and alcoves, piled higgledy-piggledy on the roof. Leaving the elevator my guide led me up one flight of steps so narrow that a corpulent man would have stuck tight, then down a similar flight on the other side, under wooden archways so low that we had to stoop, round unexpected corners, and again up a flight of steps which brought us out on the roof. Crossing a short iron bridge we entered another maze, until just as I was beginning to feel dizzy I was shown into a tiny room about ten feet square where sat an officer in the uniform of a British colonel. The impassive chauffeur announced me and withdrew.

" Good-afternoon, Mr. Dukes," said the Colonel, rising

and greeting me with a warm handshake. "I am glad to see you. You doubtless wonder that no explanation has been given you as to why you should return to England. Well, I have to inform you, confidentially, that it has been proposed to offer you a somewhat responsible post in the Secret Intelligence Service."

I gasped. "But," I stammered, "I have never—— May I ask what it implies?"

"Certainly," he replied. "We have reason to believe that Russia will not long continue to be open to foreigners. We wish some one to remain there to keep us informed of the march of events."

"But," I put in," my present work? It is important, and if I drop it——"

"We foresaw that objection," replied the Colonel, "and I must tell you that under war regulations we have the right to requisition your services if need be. You have been attached to the Foreign Office. This office also works in conjunction with the Foreign Office, which has been consulted on this question. Of course," he added bitingly, "if the risk or danger alarms you——"

I forget what I said but he did not continue.

"Very well," he proceeded, "consider the matter and return at 4.30 to-morrow. If you have no valid reason for not accepting this post we will consider you in our service and I will tell you further details." He rang a bell. A young lady appeared and escorted me out, threading her way with what seemed to me marvellous dexterity through the maze of passages.

Burning with curiosity and fascinated already by the mystery of this elevated labyrinth I ventured a query to my young female guide. "What sort of establishment is this?" I said. I detected a twinkle in her eye. She shrugged her shoulders and without reply pressed the button for the elevator. "Good-afternoon," was all she said as I passed in.

Next day another young lady escorted me up and down the narrow stairways and ushered me into the presence of the Colonel. I found him in a fair-sized apartment with easy-chairs and walls hidden by bookcases. He seemed to take it for granted that I had nothing to say. "I will tell you briefly what we desire," he said. "Then you may make any comments you wish, and I will take you up to interview—er—the Chief. Briefly, we want you to return to Soviet Russia and to send reports on the situation there. We wish to be accurately informed as to the attitude of every section of the community, the degree of support enjoyed by the Bolshevik

Government, the development and modification of its policy, what possibility there may be for an alteration of régime or for a counter-revolution, and what part Germany is playing. As to the means whereby you gain access to the country, under what cover you will live there, and how you will send out reports, we shall leave it to you, being best informed as to conditions, to make suggestions."

He expounded his views on Russia, asking for my corroboration or correction, and also mentioned the names of a few English people I might come into contact with. "I will see if—er—the Chief is ready," he said finally, rising, "I will be back in a moment."

The apartment appeared to be an office but there were no papers on the desk. I rose and stared at the books on the book-shelves. My attention was arrested by an edition of Thackeray's works in a decorative binding of what looked like green Morocco. I used at one time to dabble in bookbinding and am always interested in an artistically bound book. I took down *Henry Esmond* from the shelf. To my bewilderment the cover did not open, until, passing my finger accidentally along what I thought was the edge of the pages, the front suddenly flew open of itself, disclosing a box! In my astonishment I almost dropped the volume and a sheet of paper slipped out on to the floor. I picked it up hastily and glanced at it. It was headed *Kriegsministerium, Berlin*, had the German Imperial arms imprinted on it, and was covered with minute handwriting in German. I had barely slipped it back into the box and replaced the volume on the shelf when the Colonel returned.

"Ah—the—er—Chief is not in," he said, "but you may see him to-morrow. You are interested in books?" he added, seeing me look at the shelves. "I collect them. That is an interesting old volume on Cardinal Richelieu, if you care to look at it. I picked it up in Charing Cross Road for a shilling." The volume mentioned was immediately above *Henry Esmond*. I took it down warily, expecting something uncommon to occur, but it was only a musty old volume in French with torn leaves and soiled pages. I pretended to be interested. "There is not much else there worth looking at, I think," said the Colonel casually. "Well, good-bye. Come in to-morrow."

I wondered mightily who "the Chief" of this establishment could be and what he would be like. The young lady smiled enigmatically as she showed me to the elevator. I returned again next day after thinking overnight how I should get back to Russia—and decided on nothing. My mind

seemed to be a complete blank on the subject in hand and I was entirely absorbed in the mysteries of the roof-labyrinth.

Again I was shown into the Colonel's sitting-room. My eyes fell instinctively on the book-shelf. The Colonel was in a genial mood. "I see you like my collection," he said. "That, by the way, is a fine edition of Thackeray." My heart leaped! "It is the most luxurious binding I have ever yet found. Would you not like to look at it?"

I looked at the Colonel very hard, but his face was a mask. My immediate conclusion was that he wished to initiate me into the secrets of the department. I rose quickly and took down *Henry Esmond*, which was in exactly the same place as it had been the day before. To my utter confusion it opened quite naturally and I found in my hands nothing more than an *edition de luxe* printed on Indian paper and profusely illustrated! I stared bewildered at the shelf. There was no other *Henry Esmond*. Immediately over the vacant space stood the life of Cardinal Richelieu as it had stood yesterday. I replaced the volume, and trying not to look disconcerted turned to the Colonel. His expression was quite impassive, even bored. "It is a beautiful edition," he repeated, as if wearily. "Now if you are ready we will go and see—er—the Chief."

Feeling very foolish I stuttered assent and followed. As we proceeded through the maze of stairways and unexpected passages which seemed to me like a miniature House of Usher, I caught glimpses of treetops, of the Embankment Gardens, the Thames, the Tower Bridge, and Westminster. From the suddenness with which the angle of view changed I concluded that in reality we were simply gyrating in one very limited space, and when suddenly we entered a spacious study—the sanctum of "—er—the Chief"—I had an irresistible sentiment that we had moved only a few yards and that this study was immediately above the Colonel's office.

It was a low, dark chamber at the extreme top of the building. The Colonel knocked, entered, and stood at attention. Nervous and confused I followed, painfully conscious that at that moment I could not have expressed a sane opinion on any subject under the sun. From the threshold the room seemed bathed in semi-obscurity. The writing-desk was so placed with the window behind it that on entering everything appeared only in silhouette. It was some seconds before I could clearly distinguish things. A row of half a dozen extending telephones stood at the left of a big desk littered with papers. On a side table were numerous maps and drawings, with models of aeroplanes, submarines, and

mechanical devices, while a row of bottles of various colours and a distilling outfit with a rack of test-tubes bore witness to chemical experiments and operations. These evidences of scientific investigation only served to intensify an already overpowering atmosphere of strangeness and mystery.

But it was not these things that engaged my attention as I stood nervously waiting. It was not the bottles or the machinery that attracted my gaze. My eyes fixed themselves on the figure at the writing-table. In the capacious swing desk-chair, his shoulders hunched, with his head supported on one hand, busily writing, there sat in his shirt-sleeves——

Alas, no! Pardon me, reader, I was forgetting! There are still things I may not divulge. There are things that must still remain shrouded in secrecy. And one of them is —who was the figure in the swing desk-chair in the darkened room at the top of the roof-labyrinth near Trafalgar Square on this August day in 1918. I may not describe him, nor mention even one of his twenty-odd names. Suffice it to say that, awe-inspired as I was at this first encounter, I soon learned to regard "the Chief" with feelings of the deepest personal regard and admiration. He was a British officer and an English gentleman of the finest stamp, absolutely fearless and gifted with limitless resources of subtle ingenuity, and I count it one of the greatest privileges of my life to have been brought within the circle of his acquaintanceship.

In silhouette I saw myself motioned to a chair. The Chief wrote for a moment and then suddenly turned with the unexpected remark, "So I understand you want to go back to Soviet Russia, do you?" as if it had been my own suggestion. The conversation was brief and precise. The words Archangel, Stockholm, Riga, Helsingfors recurred frequently, and the names were mentioned of English people in those places and in Petrograd. It was finally decided that I alone should determine how and by what route I should regain access to Russia and how I should despatch reports.

"Don't go and get killed," said the Chief in conclusion, smiling. "You will put him through the ciphers," he added to the colonel, "and take him to the laboratory to learn inks and all that."

We left the Chief and arrived by a single flight of steps at the door of the colonel's room. The colonel laughed. "You will find your way about in course of time," he said. "Let us go to the laboratory at once. . ."

And here I draw a veil over the roof-labyrinth. Three weeks later I set out for Russia, into the unknown.

I resolved to make my first attempt at entry from the north, and travelled up to Archangel on a troopship of American soldiers, most of whom hailed from Detroit. But I found the difficulties at Archangel to be much greater than I had anticipated. It was 600 miles to Petrograd and most of this distance would have to be done on foot through unknown moorland and forest. The roads were closely watched, and before my plans were ready autumn storms broke and made the moors and marshes impassable. But at Archangel, realising that to return to Russia as an Englishman was impossible, I let my beard grow and assumed an appearance entirely Russian.

Failing in Archangel I travelled down to Helsingfors to try my luck from the direction of Finland. Helsingfors, the capital of Finland, is a busy little city bristling with life and intrigue. At the time of which I am writing it was a sort of dumping-ground for every variety of conceivable and inconceivable rumour, slander, and scandal, repudiated elsewhere but swallowed by the gullible scandalmongers, especially German and *ancien régime* Russian, who found in this city a haven of rest. Helsingfors was one of the unhealthiest spots in Europe. Whenever mischance brought me there I lay low, avoided society, and made it a rule to tell everybody the direct contrary of my real intentions, even in trivial matters.

In Helsingfors I was introduced at the British Consulate to an agent of the American Secret Service who had recently escaped from Russia. This gentleman gave me a letter to a Russian officer in Viborg, by name Melnikoff. The little town of Viborg, being the nearest place of importance to the Russian frontier, was a hornet's nest of Russian refugees, counter-revolutionary conspirators, German agents, and Bolshevist spies, worse if anything than Helsingfors. Disguised now as a middle-class commercial traveller I journeyed on to Viborg, took a room at the same hotel as I had been told Melnikoff stayed at, looked him up, and presented my note of introduction. I found him to be a Russian naval officer of the finest stamp and intuitively conceived an immediate liking for him. His real name, I discovered, was not Melnikoff, but in those parts many people had a variety of names to suit different occasions. My meeting with him was providential, for it appeared that he had worked with Captain Crombie, late British Naval Attaché at Petrograd. In September, 1918, Captain Crombie was murdered by the Bolsheviks at the British Embassy and it was the threads of his shattered organisation that I hoped to pick up upon

arrival in Petrograd. Melnikoff was slim, dark, with stubbly hair, blue eyes, short and muscular. He was deeply religious and was imbued with an intense hatred of the Bolsheviks—not without reason, since both his father and his mother had been brutally shot by them, and he himself had only escaped by a miracle. "The searchers came at night," he related the story to me. "I had some papers referring to the insurrection at Yaroslavl which my mother kept for me. They demanded access to my mother's room. My father barred the way, saying she was dressing. A sailor tried to push past, and my father angrily struck him aside. Suddenly a shot rang out and my father fell dead on the threshold of my mother's bedroom. I was in the kitchen when the Reds came and through the door I fired and killed two of them. A volley of shots was directed at me. I was wounded in the hand and only just escaped by the back stairway. Two weeks later my mother was executed on account of the discovery of my papers."

Melnikoff had but one sole object left in life—to avenge his parent's blood. This was all he lived for. As far as Russia was concerned he was frankly a monarchist, so I avoided talking politics with him. But we were friends from the moment we met, and I had the peculiar feeling that somewhere, long, long ago, we had met before, although I knew this was not so.

Melnikoff was overjoyed to learn of my desire to return to Soviet Russia. He undertook not only to make the arrangements with the Finnish frontier patrols for me to be put across the frontier at night secretly, but also to precede me to Petrograd and make arrangements there for me to find shelter. Great hostility still existed between Finland and Soviet Russia. Skirmishes frequently occurred, and the frontier was guarded jealously by both sides. Melnikoff gave me two addresses in Petrograd where I might find him, one at a hospital where he had formerly lived, and the other of a small café which still existed in a private flat unknown to the Bolshevik authorities.

Perhaps it was a pardonable sin in Melnikoff that he was a toper. We spent three days together in Viborg making plans for Petrograd while he drank up all my whisky except a small medicine bottle full which I hid away. When he had satisfied himself that my stock was really exhausted he announced himself ready to start. It was a Friday and we arranged that I should follow two days later on Sunday night, November 24. Melnikoff wrote out a password on a slip of paper. "Give that to the Finnish patrols," he said, "at the

third house, the wooden one with the white porch, on the left of the frontier bridge."

At six o'clock he went into his room, returning in a few minutes so transformed that I hardly recognised him. He wore a sort of seaman's cap that came right down over his eyes. He had dirtied his face, and this, added to the three-days'-old hirsute stubble on his chin, gave him a truly demoniacal appearance. He wore a shabby coat and trousers of a dark colour, and a muffler was tied closely round his neck. He looked a perfect *apache* as he stowed away a big Colt revolver inside his trousers.

"Good-bye," he said simply, extending his hand; then stopped and added, "let us observe the good old Russian custom and sit down for a minute together." According to a beautiful custom that used to be observed in Russia in the olden days, friends sit down at the moment of parting and maintain a moment's complete silence while each wishes the other a safe journey and prosperity. Melnikoff and I sat down opposite each other. With what fervour I wished him success on the dangerous journey he was undertaking for me! Suppose he were shot in crossing the frontier? Neither I nor any one would know! He would just vanish—one more good man gone to swell the toll of victims of the revolution. And I! Well, I might follow! 'Twas a question of luck, and 'twas all in the game!

We rose. "Good-bye," said Melnikoff again. He turned, crossed himself, and passed out of the room. On the threshold he looked back. "Sunday evening," he added, "without fail." I had a curious feeling I ought to say something, I knew not what, but no words came. I followed him quickly down the stairs. He did not look round again. At the street door he glanced rapidly in every direction, pulled his cap still further over his eyes, and passed away into the darkness—to an adventure that was to cost him his life. I only saw him once more after that, for a brief moment in Petrograd, under dramatic circumstances—but that comes later in my story.

I slept little that night. My thoughts were all of Melnikoff, somewhere or other at dead of night risking his life, outwitting the Red outposts. He would *laugh* away danger, I was sure, if caught in a tight corner. His laugh would be a devilish one—the sort to allay all Bolshevik suspicions! Then, in the last resort, was there not always his Colt? I thought of his past, of his mother and father, of the story he had related to me. How his fingers would itch to handle that Colt!

I rose early next day but there was not much for me to

do. Being Saturday the Jewish booths in the usually busy little market-place were shut and only the Finnish ones were open. Most articles of the costume which I had decided on were already procured, but I made one or two slight additions on this day and on Sunday morning when the Jewish booths opened. My outfit consisted of a Russian shirt, black leather breeches, black knee-boots, a shabby tunic, and an old leather cap with a fur brim and a little tassel on top, of the style worn by the Finns in the district north of Petrograd. With my shaggy black beard, which by now was quite profuse, and long unkempt hair dangling over my ears I looked a sight indeed, and in England or America should doubtless have been regarded as a thoroughly undesirable alien.

On Sunday an officer friend of Melnikoff's came to see me and make sure I was ready. I knew him by the Christian name and patronymic of Ivan Sergeievitch. He was a pleasant fellow, kind and considerate. Like many other refugees from Russia he had no financial resources and was trying to make a living for himself, his wife, and his children by smuggling Finnish money and butter into Petrograd, where both were sold at a high premium. Thus he was on good terms with the Finnish patrols who also practised this trade and whose friendship he cultivated.

"Have you any passport yet, Pavel Pavlovitch?" Ivan Sergeievitch asked me.

"No," I replied, "Melnikoff said the patrols would furnish me with one."

"Yes, that is best," he said; "they have the Bolshevik stamps. But we also collect the passports of all refugees from Petrograd, for they often come in handy. And if anything happens remember you are a 'speculator.'"

All were stigmatized by the Bolsheviks as speculators who indulged in the private sale or purchase of foodstuffs or clothing. They suffered severely, but it was better to be a speculator than what I was.

When darkness fell Ivan Sergeievitch accompanied me to the station and part of the way in the train, though we sat spearately so that it should not be seen that I was travelling with one who was known to be a Russian officer.

"And remember, Pavel Pavlovitch," said Ivan Sergeievitch, "go to my flat whenever you are in need. There is housekeeper there who will admit you if you say I sent you. But do not let the house porter see you—he is a Bolshevik—and be careful the house committee do not know, for they will ask who is visiting the house."

I was grateful for this offer, which turned out to be very valuable.

We boarded the train at Viborg and sat at opposite ends of the compartment, pretending not to know each other. When Ivan Sergeievitch got out at his destination he cast one glance at me but we made no sign of recognition. I sat huddled up gloomily in my corner, obsessed with the inevitable feeling that everybody was watching me. The very walls and seats seemed possessed of eyes! That man over there, did he not look at me—twice? And that woman, spying constantly (I thought) out of the corner of her eye! They would let me get as far as the frontier, then they would send word over to the Reds that I was coming! I shivered and was ready to curse myself for my fool adventure. But there was no turning back! *Forsan et haec olim meminisse juvabit*, wrote Virgil. (I used to write that on my Latin books at school—I hated Latin.) "Perhaps some day it will amuse you to remember even these things"—cold comfort, though, in a scrape and with your neck in a noose. Yet these escapades *are* amusing—afterwards.

At last the train stopped at Rajajoki, the last station on the Finnish side of the frontier. It was a pitch-dark night with no moon. Half a mile remained to the frontier. and I made my way along the rails in the direction of Russia and down to the wooden bridge over the little frontier river Sestro. I looked curiously across at the gloomy buildings and the dull, twinkling lights on the other bank. That was my Promised Land over there, but it was flowing not with milk and honey but with blood. The Finnish sentry stood at his post at the bar of the frontier bridge and twenty paces away, on the other side, was the Red sentry. I left the bridge on my right and turned to look for the house of the Finnish patrols to whom I had been directed.

Finding the little wooden villa with the white porch I knocked timidly. The door opened, and I handed in the slip of paper on which Melnikoff had written the password. The Finn who opened the door examined the paper by the light of a greasy oil lamp, then held the lamp to my face, peered closely at me, and finally signalled to me to enter.

"Come in," he said. "We were expecting you. How are you feeling?" I did not tell him how I was really feeling, but replied cheerily that I was feeling splendid.

"That's right," he said. "You are lucky in having a dark night for it. A week ago one of our fellows was shot as we put him over the river. His body fell into the water and we have not yet fished it out."

This, I suppose, was the Finnish way of cheering me up. "Has any one been over since?" I queried, affecting a tone of indifference. "Only Melnikoff." "Safely?" The Finn shrugged his shoulders. "We put him across all right—*a dalshe ne znayu* . . . what happened to him after that I don't know"

The Finn was a lean, cadaverous-looking fellow. He led me into a tiny eating-room, where three men sat round a smoking oil lamp. The window was closely curtained and the room was intolerably stuffy. The table was covered with a filthy cloth on which a few broken lumps of black bread, some fish, and a samovar were placed. All four men were shabbily dressed and very rough in appearance. They spoke Russian well, but conversed in Finnish amongst themselves. One of them said something to the cadaverous man and appeared to be remonstrating with him for telling me of the accident that had happened to their colleague a week before. The cadaverous Finn answered with some heat. "Melnikoff is a chuckle-headed scatterbrain," persisted the cadaverous man, who appeared to be the leader of the party. "We told him not to be such a fool as to go into Petrograd again. The Redskins are searching for him everywhere and every detail of his appearance is known. But he *would* go. I suppose he loves to have his neck in a noose. With you, I suppose, it is different. Melnikoff says you are somebody important—but that's none of our business. But the Redskins don't like the English. If I were you I wouldn't go for anything. But it's your affair, of course."

We sat down to the loaves and fishes. The samovar was boiling, and while we swilled copious supplies of weak tea out of dirty glasses the Finns retailed the latest news from Petrograd. The cost of bread, they said, had risen to about 800 or 1,000 times its former price. People hacked dead horses to pieces in the streets. All the warm clothing had been taken and given to the Red Army. The *Tchrezvichaika* (The Extraordinary Commission) was arresting and shooting workmen as well as the educated people. Zinoviev threatened to exterminate all the bourgeoisie if any further attempt was made to molest the Soviet Government. When the Jewish Commissar Uritzky was murdered Zinoviev shot more than 500 at a stroke; nobles, professors, officers, journalists, teachers, men and women, and a list of a further 500 was published who would be shot at the next attempt on a Commissar's life. I listened patiently, regarding the bulk of these stories as the product of Finnish imagination. "You will be held up frequently to be examined," the cadaverous man warned me, "and do not carry parcels—they will be taken from you in the street."

After supper we sat down to discuss the plans of crossing. The cadaverous Finn took a pencil and paper and drew a rough sketch of the frontier.

"We will put you over in a boat at the same place as Melnikoff," he said. "Here is the river with woods on either bank. Here, about a mile up, is an open meadow on the Russian side. It is now 10 o'clock. About 3 we will go out quietly and follow the road that skirts the river on this side till we get opposite the meadow. That is where you cross."

"Why at the open spot?" I queried, surprised. "Shall I not be seen there most easily of all? Why not put me across into the woods?"

"Because the woods are patrolled, and the outposts change their place every night. We cannot follow their movements. Several people have tried to cross into the woods. A few succeeded, but most were either caught or had to fight their way back. But this meadow is a most unlikely place for any one to cross, so the Redskins don't watch it. Besides, being open we can see if there is any one on the other side. We will put you across just here," he said, indicating a narrow place in the stream at the middle of the meadow. "At these narrows the water runs faster, making a noise, so we are less likely to be heard. When you get over run up the slope slightly to the left. There is a path which leads up to the road. Be careful of this cottage, though," he added, making a cross on the paper at the extreme northern end of the meadow. "The Red patrol lives in that cottage, but at 3 o'clock they will probably be asleep."

There remained only the preparation of "certificates of identification" which should serve as passport in Soviet Russia. Melnikoff had told me I might safely leave this matter to the Finns who kept themselves well informed of the kind of papers it was best to carry to allay the suspicions of Red guards and Bolshevik police officials. We rose and passed into another of the three tiny rooms which the villa contained. It was a sort of office, with paper, ink, pens, and a typewriter on the table.

"What name do you want to have?" asked the cadaverous man.

"Oh, any," I replied. "Better, perhaps, let it have a slightly non-Russian smack. My accent——"

"They won't notice it," he said, "but if you prefer——"

"Give him an Ukrainian name," suggested one of the other Finns, "he talks rather like a Little Russian." Ukrainia, or Little Russia, is the south-west district of European Russia, where a dialect with an admixture of Polish is talked.

The cadaverous man thought for a moment. " 'Afirenko, Joseph Ilitch,' " he suggested, " that smacks of Ukrainia."

I agreed. One of the men sat down to the typewriter and carefully choosing a certain sort of paper began to type. The cadaverous man went to a small cupboard, unlocked it, and took out a box full of rubber stamps of various sizes and shapes with black handles.

" Soviet seals," he said, laughing at my amazement. " We keep ourselves up to date, you see. Some of them were stolen, some we made ourselves, and this one," he pressed it on a sheet of paper leaving the imprint *Commissar of the Frontier Station Bielo'ostrof*, " we bought from over the river for a bottle of vodka." Bielo'ostrof was the Russian frontier village just across the stream.

I had had ample experience earlier in the year of the magical effect upon the rudimentary intelligence of Bolshevik authorities of official " documents " with prominent seals or stamps. Multitudinous stamped papers of any description were a great asset in travelling, but a big, coloured seal was a talisman that levelled all obstacles. The wording and even language of the document were of secondary importance. A friend of mine once travelled from Petrograd to Moscow with no other passport than a receipted English tailor's bill. This " certificate of identification " had a big, printed heading with the name of the tailor, some English postage stamps attached, and a flourishing signature in red ink. He flaunted the document in the face of the officials, assuring them it was a diplomatic passport issued by the British Embassy ! This, however, was in the early days of Bolshevism. The Bolsheviks gradually removed illiterates from service and in the course of time restrictions became very severe. But seals were as essential as ever.

When the Finn had finished typing he pulled the paper out of the typewriter and handed it to me for perusal. In the top left-hand corner it had this heading :

Extraordinary Commissar of the Central Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Red Armymen's Deputies.

Then followed the text :

CERTIFICATE

" This is to certify that Joseph Afirenko is in the service of the Extraordinary Commissar of the Central Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Red Armymen's Deputies in the capacity of office clerk, as the accompanying signatures and seal attest."

"In the service of the Extraordinary Commissar?" I gasped, taken aback by the amazing audacity of the thing.

"Why not?" said the cadaverous man coolly, "what could be safer?"

What, indeed? What could be safer than to purport to be in the service of the institution whose duty it was to hound down all—old or young, rich or poor, educated or illiterate—who ventured to oppose and sought to expose the pseudo-proletarian Bolshevik administration? Nothing, of course, could be safer! *S volkami zhitj, po voltchi vitj*, as the Russians say. "If you must live amongst wolves, then howl, too, as the wolves do!"

"Now for the signatures and seal," said the Finn. "Tihonov and Friedmann used to sign these papers, though it doesn't matter much, it's only the seal that counts." From some Soviet papers on the table he selected one with two signatures from which to copy. Choosing a suitable pen he scrawled beneath the text of my passport in an almost illegibe slanting hand, "Tihonov." This was the signature of a proxy of the Extraordinary Commissar. The paper must also be signed by a secretary, or his proxy. "Sign for your own secretary," said the Finn, laughing and pushing the paper to me. "Write upright this time, like this. Here is the original. 'Friedmann' is the name." Glancing at the original I made an irregular scrawl, resembling in some way the signature of the Bolshevik official.

"Have you a photograph?" asked the cadaverous man. I gave him a photograph I had had taken at Viborg. Cutting it down small he stuck it at the side of the paper. Then, taking a round rubber seal, he made two imprints over the photograph. The seal was a red one, with the same inscription inside the periphery as was at the head of the paper. The inner space of the seal consisted of the five-pointed Bolshevik star with a mallet and a plough in the centre.

"That is your certificate of service," said the Finn, "we will give you a second one of personal identification." Another paper was quickly printed off with the words, "The holder of this is the Soviet employee, Joseph Ilitch Afirenko, aged 36 years." This paper was unnecessary in itself, but two "documents" were always better than one.

It was now after midnight and the leader of the Finnish patrol ordered us to lie down for a short rest. He threw himself on a couch in the eating-room. There were only two beds for the remaining four of us and I lay down on one of them with one of the Finns. I tried to sleep but couldn't. I thought of all sorts of things—of Russia in the past, of the life of

adventure I had elected to lead for the present, of the morrow, of friends still in Petrograd who must not know of my return—if I got there. I was nervous, but the dejection that had overcome me in the train was gone. I saw the essential humour of my situation. The whole adventure was really one big exclamation mark; *Forsan et haec olim*. . . .

The two hours of repose seemed interminable. I was afraid of 3 o'clock and yet I wanted it to come quicker, to get it over. At last a shuffling noise approached from the neighbouring room and the cadaverous Finn prodded each of us with the butt of his rifle. "Wake up," he whispered, "we'll leave in a quarter of an hour. No noise. The people in the next cottage mustn't hear us."

We were ready in a few minutes. My entire baggage was a small parcel that went into my pocket, containing a pair of socks, one or two handkerchiefs, and some dry biscuits. In another pocket I had the medicine bottle of whisky I had hidden from Melnikoff, and some bread, while I hid my money inside my shirt. One of the four Finns remained behind. The other three were to accompany me to the river. It was a raw and frosty November night, and pitch dark. Nature was still as death. We issued silently from the house, the cadaverous man leading. One of the men followed up behind, and all carried their rifles ready for use.

We walked stealthily along the road the Finn had pointed out to me on paper overnight, bending low where no trees sheltered us from the Russian bank. A few yards below on the right I heard the trickling of the river stream. We soon arrived at a ramshackle villa standing on the river surrounded by trees and thickets. Here we stood stock-still for a moment to listen for any unexpected sounds. The silence was absolute. But for the trickling there was not a rustle.

We descended to the water under cover of the tumbledown villa and the bushes. The stream was about twenty paces wide at this point. Along both banks there was an edging of ice. I looked across at the opposite side. It was open meadow, but the trees loomed darkly a hundred paces away on either hand in the background. On the left I could just see the cottage of the Red patrol against which the Finns had warned me.

The cadaverous man took up his station at a slight break in the thickets. A moment later he returned and announced that all was well. "Remember," he enjoined me once in an undertone, "run slightly to the left, but—keep an eye on that cottage." He made a sign to the other two and from the bushes they dragged out a boat. Working noiselessly

they attached a long rope to the stern and laid a pole in it. Then they slid it down the bank into the water.

"Get into the boat," whispered the leader, "and push yourself across with the pole. And good luck!"

I shook hands with my companions, pulled at my little bottle of whisky, and got into the boat. I started pushing, but with the rope trailing behind, it was no easy task to put the little bark straight across the running stream. I was sure I should be heard, and had amidstreams the sort of feeling I should imagine a man has as he walks his last walk to the gallows. At length I was at the farther side, but it was impossible to hold the boat steady while I landed. In jumping ashore I crashed through the thin layer of ice. I scrambled out and up the bank. And the boat was hastily pulled back to Finland behind me.

"Run hard!" I heard a low call from over the water.

Damn it, the noise of my splash had reached the Red patrol! I was already running hard when I saw a light emerge from the cottage on the left. I forgot the injunctions as to direction and simply bolted away from that lantern. Halfway across the sloping meadow I dropped and lay still. The light moved rapidly along the river bank. There was shouting, and then suddenly shots, but there was no reply from the Finnish side. Then the light began to move slowly back toward the cottage of the Red patrol, and finally all was silent again.

I lay motionless for some time, then rose and proceeded cautiously. Having missed the right direction I found I had to negotiate another small stream that ran obliquely down the slope of the meadow. Being already wet I did not suffer by wading through it. Then I reached some garden fences over which I climbed and found myself in the road.

Convincing myself that the road was deserted I crossed it and came out on to the moors where I found a half-built house. Here I sat down to await the dawn—blessing the man who invented whisky, for I was very cold. It began to snow, and half-frozen I got up to walk about and study the locality as well as I could in the dark. At the cross-roads near the station I discovered some soldiers sitting round a bivouac fire, so I retreated quickly to my half-built house and waited till it was light. Then I approached the station with other passengers. At the gate a soldier was examining passports. I was not a little nervous when showing mine for the first time, but the examination was a very cursory one. The soldier seemed only to be assuring himself the paper had a proper seal. He passed me through and I went to the ticket office and demanded a ticket.

" One first-class to Petrograd," I said, boldly.

" There is no first-class by this train, only second and third."

" No first? Then give me a second." I had asked the Finns what class I ought to travel, expecting them to say third. But they replied: First, of course, for it would be strange to see an employee of the Extraordianry Commission travelling other than first-class. Third-class was for workers and peasants.

The journey to Petrograd was about twenty-five miles, and stopping at every station the train took nearly two hours. As we approached the city the coaches filled up until people were standing in the aisles and on the platforms. There was a crush on the Finland Station at which we arrived. The examination of papers was again merely cursory. I pushed out with the throng and looking around me on the dirty, rubbish-strewn station, I felt a curious mixture of relief and apprehension. A flood of strange thoughts and recollections rushed through my mind. I saw my whole life in a new and hitherto undreamt-of perspective. Days of wandering in Europe, student days in Russia, life amongst the Russian peasantry, and three years of apparently aimless war work all at once assumed symmetrical proportions and appeared like the sides of a prism leading to a common apex at which I stood. Yes, my life, I suddenly realised, *had* had an aim—it was to stand here on the threshold of the city that was my home, homeless, helpless, and friendless, one of the common crowd. That was it—*one of the common crowd!* I wanted not the theories of theorists, not the doctrines of doctrinaires, but to see what the greatest social experiment the world has ever witnessed did for the common crowd. And strangely buoyant I stepped lightly out of the station into the familiar streets.

THE LADY WITH A PISTOL

Steinhauer, the master spy of the Kaiser, tells a story about a fascinating French spy who stole an important naval report from Admiral von Senden, the Chief of the German Naval Staff.

By

S. T. FELSTEAD

One morning Herr von Richtofen, the Commissioner of Police, the man whose long white beard was famous all over Europe, sent for me in great haste and asked if I was sufficiently versed in the English language to enable me, in case of necessity, to pass as an Englishman.

It was never a practice of mine to admit I could not do anything in those days. I was ambitious, and fully believed I could carry out any mission, whether I spoke English like an Englishman or not.

" Very well, then," said the commissioner, " I expect you know Admiral von Senden."

I did, for not only had I made the admiral's acquaintance during the years I had spent with the Kaiser on board the *Hohenzollern* but I had also recently carried out a discreet and personal mission for him.

" Good," said Richtofen. " Then prepare yourself this afternoon to receive an order from his Excellency. And when I tell you to preserve complete silence about it, you will understand that the matter is of the gravest importance.

" It will be sufficient for your purpose to know that a secret naval report, which was to be presented to the Kaiser, has mysteriously disappeared. Now you can go."

Punctually at five o'clock that afternoon the Chief Commissioner met me at the Alexanderplatz.

We went on foot along the Königstrasse, across the Molkenmarkt and Spittelmarkt, and finally came to the fashionable wine restaurant of Lutter and Wegner.

It was not long before two men appeared, whom I immediately recognised. They were Admiral von Senden and, to my surprise, the Kaiser's close friend, Prince Eulenberg.

The three men greeted each other while I, of course, stood on one side. Then I was introduced. No one stood on ceremony, and Eulenberg and von Selden remarked in their jovial way : " We know each other already, Mr. Steinhauer."

Herr von Richtofen said to the other two : " Gentlemen, I have my own private table here, and so I can retire. Mr. Steinhauer is entirely at your disposal."

With that he left us.

" Two days ago," began von Senden, " I gave a supper party, to which I invited gentlemen not only of the Foreign Office, but also several foreign personalities belonging to different Embassies in Berlin.

" There were members of nearly all the Diplomatic Corps present ; even the Chancellor had come, and the Kaiser had informed me of his intention to be present.

" At the request of a French Embassy officer, I had also invited the latter's friend, who, with a lady, presumably his wife, was staying in Berlin on a visit. The wife had expressed her desire to see the Kaiser.

" As the request had only been made at the last moment, I had no time to inform myself about these people beforehand.

" I had intended," he continued, " to report that evening to the Kaiser on an extremely important matter concerning the relations of our fleet with those of England and France.

" As is always the case at such gatherings, the possibility of the Kaiser's appearance was eagerly discussed. I remarked several times, quite openly, that I felt sure that the Kaiser would come, and in order to emphasise my remark pointed to the document which I had placed in the inner pocket of my coat.

" It got later and later, and it seemed that the Kaiser would not put in an appearance after all. For that reason I took the document out of my pocket, as it was getting uncomfortable there, and put it in a cabinet in the next room.

" At the last moment, as he was so fond of doing, the Kaiser suddenly appeared without being announced, and found the whole company in an animated mood. After the first ceremonies were over, I felt in my pocket for the document, but to my surprise I could not find it. In the excitement of the Kaiser's arrival, I had forgotten that I had taken the packet out of my pocket and put it in the room adjoining. I hurried into the next room to fetch it—but it had disappeared.

" It was only on the following morning that I became convinced that it must have been stolen. I asked every one of my officers and staff ; they had nearly all seen it, but not one of them knew anything about its disappearance.

" I immediately called on Prince Eulenberg, who was then staying at an hotel in Berlin, to ask him if he could throw any light on the mystery. Now, the prince had

whispered to me in the course of the evening that he believed the pretty French Baroness to be an imposter. He had met the lady several times before, in Paris and Vienna, and each time she had been in the company of a different man.

"She spoke very good English," explained the poor admiral, who was equally afraid of the Kaiser in his wrathful moments. 'Eulenberg said that when he first made her acquaintance she was calling herself a baroness, and he had no doubt that she was in reality a dangerous French spy.' Some time before she had got herself into trouble in St. Petersburg, and the police in that city had warned her to clear out.

"So you see," he concluded, "we are in a difficult position. If she has stolen the report it is now in all probability on its way to the Quai d'Orsay. One of my officers, a Captain-Lieutenant Braun, found her in rather a remarkable situation in the room in which I left the document. She was fumbling with her frock and seemed embarrassed when the officer came in."

Prince Eulenberg then told me that it could only have been this fascinating baroness, for, he explained, it had been for a similar reason that she had been exiled from St. Petersburg.

"When I tell you," remarked his Highness, "that the Russians caught her in the bedroom of the Austrian military attaché, trying to purloin an important State paper, you will understand that she is not a person to be trifled with."

Prince Eulenberg thought the Frenchman who had brought her to the admiral's party and had introduced her to everybody as his wife, was nothing more than the victim of a cunning international spy—one of those beautiful women who are to be found in all the Capitals of Europe living on their wits.

Both von Selden and Eulenberg were emphatic about the necessity of secrecy. When the police offered to telephone to the hotel where the Frenchman and his fascinating friend had been staying, I expressed disapproval, for that would immediately warn the staff that something serious had happened.

Instead, being on confidential terms with all the pricipal hotel porters in Berlin—it is amazing the secrets these men know—I telephoned myself, and discovered that the baroness and her companion had already disappeared. At seven o'clock the previous evening the couple had boarded the train from the Potsdamer station, and it was impossible to say whether they had gone to Frankfurt, Karlsruhe or Hamburg. They had taken their own luggage to the station and,

to all intents and purposes had vanished into thin air—the lady, no doubt, hugging to her bosom a few sheets of paper worth a lot of money.

Von Senden was very depressed when I told him my news.

"Can you possibly run these people down?" he asked, anxiously. "I dread to think what will happen if it becomes known that this document has been stolen by a spy."

"I can only do my best, gentlemen," I replied. "The first thing I must do is to visit this captain-lieutenant. And," I added to Prince Eulenberg, "if your Highness will kindly speak to Herr von Richtofen you will doubtless be able to obtain the necessary permission for me to proceed on your mission. I must have expenses"—Berlin police officials not being provided with unlimited cash at any time.

Von Richtofen was most agreeable.

The captain-lieutenant, whom I had to rouse from his bed, seemed more than a little annoyed at my visit. However, when I showed him the admiral's note he was immediately attentive and told me what had happened on the night of the party.

He had entered the room where the agreement had been left, and there saw a lady in a stooping position. She had lifted up the lower part of her dress, and for a moment, he thought she must be pulling up her stocking.

"It was a little awkward, Steinhauer," said the good-looking officer, "I could not help seeing that she had most charming legs, but naturally I never suspected anything more serious than a temporary mishap. With a smile she excused herself, and asked me if I could direct her to the cloakroom. I gave her the information, and for the time being thought no more of the matter.

"But now," he concluded, "I am certain that she must have hidden the missing papers in one of her stockings."

I thought so too. Hastily bidding the captain-lieutenant good-bye, I rushed off to the Potsdamer station to find out where the pair had gone. I could get no information of any value at the booking office.

The luggage office proved no more useful. All the men who had been on duty at the time had gone home, but I succeeded in obtaining the addresses of two of the porters who had probably seen the missing couple. One lived in the Lanbergerstrasse, the other in the Grossen Frankfurterstrasse. I had to decide quickly; two slips of paper, the longer one for the last-named place.

I drew the one for the Grossen Frankfurterstrasse.

It was very late now; I had to invoke a policeman's aid

to get into the porter's house. A bright coin soothed his rancour at being aroused past midnight, and also enlivened his memory. He recollected putting three trunks on the train for Frankfurt, and gave me an exact description of the lady and her cavalier.

It was two o'clock before I got back to my own house, but before I could snatch an hour or two's rest I had to pack my own luggage, because, for all I knew, my chase might take me on to Paris.

At eight o'clock in the morning I was aboard the express for Frankfurt, and availed myself of the opportunity to get another few winks.

How long would the baroness stay in Franfurt? That was the question. I left my luggage at the station and carefully inquired at every hotel of consequence whether anything had been seen of either the lady or her friend.

No one, apparently, remembered her. By eleven o'clock at night I had tired myself out. Disheartened, wondering what I should do next, I went into a café hard-by the station to drink a coffee and cognac and decide on my next move.

I was still thinking hard when, suddenly, all my faculties became alert. A lady and a gentleman had just entered the café—and their descriptions were exactly those of the baroness and her indiscreet acquaintance.

The lady, so I had been told by the porter in Berlin, had gone away, wearing a light grey and white silk check coat, while the man wore a monacle and a stiff grey hat. The couple now sitting close by me were thus attired.

The man ordered something to eat in French; the woman spoke to her companion in English, I listened eagerly. For half an hour they talked together, but only now and again could I catch what they were saying. Luckily, there was no cab outside. They had to walk to their hotel and I followed hard on their heels. I saw the porter salute them respectfully, from which I deduced they were staying in the place; so without any waste of time I returned to the station, got my own luggage, put it in a cab and went back to the hotel, where I engaged a room in the name of Charles Jones of London.

Before I went upstairs I took the precaution of asking the night porter what time the D train left for Paris next morning.

"Nine o'clock," he said, much to my relief. At all events I could get a few hours' rest. I had already seen in the hotel register the name of H. Dupont, M. and Mme. of Paris, so I knew where I was in that direction.

Seven o'clock in the morning found me sitting in the

breakfast room. I waited, but neither the baroness nor what I shrewdly suspected to be her dupe put in an appearance.

The day porter came on duty. I took the opportunity to ask him if an English gentleman named Walker was staying in the hotel. He looked up the register, as I wanted him to.

" Ah," I remarked, looking over his shoulder, " I wonder if that is my old friend Dupont. What is he like—an elderly gentleman with a beard ? "

" No," said the porter, " he is a youngish man with a very pretty wife. He has been here since yesterday."

I said I must be mistaken—inwardly I was delighted. M. Dupont's room was on the second floor, number 64. Going upstairs again I asked the chambermaid to put me on the same floor, the room I had alrady being too noisy.

In half an hour I was in a room almost opposite the one which I felt sure contained the Anglo-German agreement. My fingers were itching to get hold of it. Towards ten o'clock in the morning out came the pretty baroness and her temporary husband. As they went downstairs talking loudly, I came out of my room and had a glance in theirs. But I did not dare go in, for there was a chambermaid in the corridor.

I asked the girl if I might have a front room. While I was talking to her, I caught sight of a big trunk in the room, which appeared to belong to the lady.

However, there was nothing I could do for the time being. I tipped the chambermaid, who told me that the baroness and her friend would be leaving the following morning, and went back to my own room, determined to break open the trunk whatever happened.

About half-past eleven the couple came upstairs again. They went into the man's room, but came out again shortly afterwards dressed for the street.

A weight fell from my shoulders as I saw from my peep-hole that the woman had locked her door and hung the key on the hook by the lintel. I followed the couple downstairs, and when I saw them take a cab and drive off, I hurried back again. The corridor was fairly empty. In less than three seconds I had quickly taken down the key of her room from the hook hung up my own in its place, unlocked the door, and had gone in, locking it again from the inside. As a precautionary measure I had also taken the key of the man's room and put it in my pocket.

Now I could not easily be disturbed ; if any one came in one of the rooms I could always disappear out of the other. I started to make a thorough search of her room, but couldn't find any documents. Then I went over to the trunk, which

unfortunately was locked, rubbed pencil on the rims of the small keyholes, and with a piece of blotting paper took an imprint. For the present I could do no more, and with the greatest care I left the room.

Then I went to a truck shop to buy a key. First I asked the proprietor to send me along one of his employees with a bunch of keys as I had lost the key to my trunk. I showed him the imprint of the keyhole, and asked him to sort out a bunch of similar keys. After a long search he brought out two.

Towards half-past seven my couple came home and, to complete my misfortune, decided to sup in the restaurant of the hotel, which seemed to indicate that they were not going out again. I, too, went into the dining-room, and sat near them, in the hope that I might hear what they were talking about. The woman seemed very nervous and drank a good deal.

The couple sat drinking and talking for three or four hours ; my chances of success seemed to recede further and further into the background, About one o'clock. however, it appeared that they had finished, so I asked for my bill and went up to my room.

When they came upstairs shortly afterwards they were very talkative. The fascinating baroness, almost drunk, put her arms around the man and kissed him so passionately that he told her angrily to be quiet.

When they finally disappeared into his room the woman was so excited that she forgot to lock her door. The key still hung on the hook where she had left it in the morning, outside the door. Now, if I liked to take the risk, I could get in any time during the night.

Gradually the hotel quietened down. In stockinged feet and with a beard to disguise my face and a box of matches in my pocket, I crept up to the door. Inside I could hear the sound of snoring.

Quietly, I opened the door, waited a few breathless moments to see if anybody had heard me, and then slipped into the lady's room. The air was heavy with rich perfume.

The trunk had been moved since the morning. It was now standing on a rack, but when I silently crept over to it with the key I had obtained I found, to my intense surprise, that it had been opened. The light of a match showed me manicure cases, a gold bag, a fan or two, and a heap of clothing—but no letters or papers.

I felt underneath, and then I could have shouted with joy, for beneath the folds of a silk dress my hand encountered a long envelope. Quickly I worked it out.

I struck another match, and then, still as the room was, I could almost hear my heart beating when I saw on the back of the envelope the blue seals of the Imperial Admiralty Staff.

Just as I had silently started back to my room I heard a sound. For a minute or two I remained still and then, my heart jumping with apprehension, tip-toed my way back towards the outer door. Suddenly I heard a sharp "Stop!" behind me.

The room was filled with light. In the doorway of the next room, clad in a short bed-jacket, stood my daring spy. Her hair was all tousled, but I could see by the glitter in her eyes, and also by the revolver in her hand, that she meant business.

But I also had drawn my pistol. The pair of us stood there for perhaps thirty seconds, wondering, no doubt, who would shoot first.

"Put your revolver down, madame," I requested, "otherwise mine might explode. I beg your pardon for disturbing your night's rest. Quite by accident, no doubt, you took this envelope," and I held it up for her to see, "from Admiral von Senden. I obey his orders when I take it back. Good-bye, madame, and a pleasant journey to Paris."

Not another word did she speak. She gradually let the revolver sink. With the hand that held it she pulled round her the curtain hanging down from the door. From the inner room came a man's voice. The woman turned to say something to him, and then, like lightning, I slipped out into the corridor.

. . . . . .

I would have given much to have been present at the interview that took place between the couple. Why had the woman put the light out the moment I disappeared?

"Yes," I thought, "you don't look so charming in your *deshabille* as you do when you are dressed for dinner."

There was nothing more for me to do except guard my precious envelope. I locked my bedroom door, and slept the sleep of the just until six o'clock in the morning, when I was awakened by the noise of people departing. I peeped out to see the hotel porter carrying out the trunks from the room opposite.

Curiosity compelled me to slip my clothes on and go down to the breakfast-room. There, securely hidden behind a newspaper, I watched the couple come in, They were dressed for travelling and seated themselves at a table, the man angry and moody, hardly taking any notice of his companion. She, for her part, looked worn out, nervous, and twenty years older.

I could see by the glitter in her eyes and also by the revolver in her hand that she meant business.
But I also had drawn my pistol.

I called the waiter over. "What is the matter with those people?" I inquired casually.

He laughed. "They probably had a row in the night, mein Herr," going on to tell me with much relish that whereas they had apparently been madly in love with each other the day before, now they must have quarrelled so violently that they couldn't speak.

I went upstairs to the rooms they had just vacated, but they had left nothing behind of importance. In the fireplace were some burnt fragments of paper which I was unable to decipher, and after wandering around Frankfurt for the day I took the night train back to Berlin.

A refreshing bath, a good breakfast, and by half-past eleven in the morning I was ready to report to Admiral von Senden. As a rule, he gave one the impression of surliness, but I have never seen a man so pleased as he was that day. His first words to me were: "Beaten, Mr. Steinhauer?"

By way of reply I pulled the envelope out, saying, "Is that it, Excellency?"

With a quick movement he tore open the envelope and drew out the contents.

"That's right, that's right," he exclaimed excitedly. "Everything intact. You did it splendidly. Now tell me all about it. No, wait a minute."

Before he heard my story he fetched a box of cigars, a bottle of brandy and two glasses. We drank each other's healths, and then I related all that had happened. What pleased him better than anything else was the opportunity of keeping the whole matter secret.

"Be ready this evening," he concluded, "to meet the Commissioner of Police and Prince Eulenberg. We must have a little celebration on an occasion like this."

At nine o'clock that evening I had again to relate my adventure. When I described the scene where the lady had stood before me in a dressing jacket with the revolver, one of the gentlemen chipped in; "Good Lord, you had some luck!"

"Not so much as you think," I replied.

I never saw the Frenchman again. But the woman, as I learned later from Prince Eulenberg, was sentenced in Vienna to several years' penal servitude for swindling. One could feel sorry for her. By the time the Austrians had done with her her powers of fascination would have vanished for good.

THE BALACLAVA LIGHTHOUSE

By

COL. VICTOR K. KALEDIN

EARLY in July, 1915, I was detailed by the Russian Intelligence Service to inspect the German colonies in the region of the Black Sea. The inhabitants of those colonies led a narrow, exclusive life upon their farms, enjoying the privileges granted to them by the Empress Catherine the Great, with only local occurrences to interest them, and marrying mostly among themselves. For them Berlin was as Mecca, and a journey to Germany in the nature of a sacred pilgrimage. It was an open secret that they flatly refused to speak Russian, and generally hated Russia and everything belonging to her. Naturally this state of affairs was noted by the German Intelligence Service, and from Major von Lauenstein I received instructions to bring the colonists definitely into the war on Germany's side.

II

MY moss-green log cabin, ten miles to the west of Odessa, on the shores of the Black Sea, and rented by me indefinitely from a fisherman, was wearing a regal mantle of gold. Sunshine sparkled over the blue maze of water-holes on every side, already tenanted by early king herons; shone on the smooth pebbles of the main road inland; lingered with a fragrant touch among the wild lemon trees; and blurred the white lime face of the cliffs, until it seemed to blend with the row of ancient Genoese crucifixes high up on the pine-crested hills beyond.

A spectacular raid on Odessa by the Turkish-German cruisers, *Goeben* and *Breslau*, had been planned by the German Naval Staff, and that I had been selected by the Berlin High Command to play an important rôle in the operation. I was first to get into touch with a certain Herr Pastor Johann Rottkopf, a former official of the Odessa harbours and now Vicar of Karlovka colony, he having perfected a scheme

which would ensure the raid being a complete success. I had already established contact with the Herr Pastor, and the next move was with him.

I heard steps from the direction of the tangle of lemon trees to my left, and saw a tall, thin figure, in clerical attire, advancing towards me. After first glancing casually around, I did not move, but remained staring idly out over the sands. I had a shrewd suspicion of the arrival's identity, and upon his coming up to me I recognised him from Major von Lauenstein's description, Herr Pastor Rottkopf, ex-official of the Odessa harbours.

The Herr Pastor frankly confided that he was a personal friend of Major von Lauenstein, and, almost apologetically, he added that his present visit was one purely of immediate business and would not take up much of my time. He thereupon produced a blank sheet of paper, and started upon a rough drawing which I at once recognised. There came first the Great Odessa Breakwater, and then the four divisions of the Black Sea port—the Pratique, the Coal, the New, and the Quarantine harbours, together with their strictly secret war-time ciphers. There were two entrances past the Breakwater into the harbours: one, as I knew, heavily mined and to all intents and purposes impassable ; the other, nor'-nor'-west, by the Roadstead Mole, which could be used by ships. To conclude, the Herr Pastor sketched in the outline of two warships shelling the town inland ; representing, of course, the *Goeben* and *Breslau*.

It appeared that the main point in the preparation for the raid by the Turkish-German cruisers was the sinking of a vessel of about 15,000 tons in the one navigable entrance past the Great Odessa Breakwater. Then, unless the treacherous currents moved the wreck, which was extremely unlikely, the four inter-connected harbours of the port, and their flotillas of destroyers, would be effectually bottled-up. Upon my inquiry as to my own part in the affair, the German proposed that I accompany him straight away down to the harbour.

At the harbour we embarked from a private pier, in a rowing-boat painted a dull black. Herr Pastor Rottkopf took the oars and steered with considerable skill through the closely anchored shipping. We threaded our way past mineral-laden tramps, with rust-tinted water gurgling down their towering sides ; past fishing craft, tarred and piled with sturgeon-baskets ; past dredgers, small out-of-work tugs, timber schooners, and coal barges ; finally running deftly alongside a 500-ton yacht. When we reached the top

of the gangway, the yacht's crew trooped aft, and stood at the break of the quarter-deck, waiting for us.

A minute or so later I was wondering whether I was dreaming, or whether I was really on board the *Spandau*. From the first moment of my sight of her, the vessel had seemed somehow familiar, and at close quarters I had quite certainly recognised her. The *Spandau*, built in 1912, had belonged originally to Baroness Mathilda von Klopmann, the wife of a Russian-born German steel magnate living in Odessa, and was one of the fastest private yachts on the Black Sea. She had now been disguised by the changing of her funnel from cream colour to black, with the addition of a broad green band ; the fitting of a couple of square-rigged yards to her foremast ; and a crude coat of tar over the trimly polished teak of her midship deck-house. The yacht's name was now the patriotic Russian one of *Rurik*, while as I afterwards learnt, the Kiel Naval Staff, at the instance of the German Intelligence Service, had supplied Baroness von Klopmann with a set of forged papers bearing the Russian pre-war registration stamp.

The *Rurik* was anchored some little way out, and had a clear passage towards the open sea. I was standing on the quarter-deck with Herr Pastor Rottkopf and Herr Krusenstern, the captain of the converted yacht, when there came the throb of a ship's engines on our starboard bow. Rottkopf and the captain broke off their conversation, and the three of us stood waiting in silence. Presently there passed us at not more than half a cable's length a large cargo boat, steaming at about twelve knots—the s.s. *Tchernobog*, of the Russian Volunteer Fleet. I heard the captain observe in a low voice that the vessel could be captured quite easily, and sunk, as required, nor'-nor'-west of the Great Odessa Breakwater. Rottkopf then turned to me and asked my opinion in the matter, and, speaking carefully, I said that to my mind the s.s. *Tchernobog* exactly met the requirements of the case. Shortly afterwards Rottkopf took his departure, and I was left to meditate upon my task of carrying out the essential preliminary step to the enemy warships' raid.

Leaving the bridge, I descended the companion-way and opened the door of the captain's private cabin. There was no one there, and, slipping quickly inside, I closed the door with a twist of the wrist. The cabin was small, well furnished, with rosewood panels, nickel battens for the charts, and a glass-fronted bookcase. On the square mahogany table, and directly under the glare of the ceiling-lamp, was lying a sectional chart of the newest lighthouses of the Black Sea,

each labelled with its double war-time cipher. The chart was, of course, properly a Russian Naval Intelligence secret, and might well be a source of serious danger in the hands of the pro-German captain of the *Rurik*. But then I noticed something more important still : namely, that the diagram of the Balaclava Lighthouse, situated on the rocks of the same name, was circled with blue copying pencil and bore traces of having been closely studied. The paper was soiled by tobacco-ash, and greasy finger-marks, and showed indentations that might have been caused by steel callipers pressed with thoughtful force.

Something inside me jumped, and a swift train of thought was started. Spy. . . . Rocks. . . . Extinguished lights. . . . Thick fog. . . . Shipwreck. . . . I had drawn a little back from the table, and was standing momentarily off my guard, when the door suddenly opened and Herr Pastor Rottkopf entered the cabin. The other's unexpected appearance under the circumstances badly startled me, and only training kept me from betraying myself. With as unconcerned an air as I could manage, I smiled at the Herr Pastor. The latter, after closing the door, came forward to the table, picked up the chart and replaced it in its batten, and then informed me that while ashore he had made arrangements for a sailing permit for the *Rurik*. At that moment the hum of the yacht's bilge-pumps ceased, and Rottkopf held out his hand in farewell. As his cold grip withdrew, I noticed quite by chance a dark smudge on his second finger, and again deep within me something sharply stirred.

III

For a full hour the *Rurik* had been doing something like twenty knots, and the German captain earned my admiration by his wonderful display of seamanship. Three days of cruising in the present vile weather had had not the slightest effect upon the captain's nerves, and he appeared to know the coast far better than his own backyard. The watch below were now all up on deck, induced there by the promise of double pay, and I could hear the watch actually on duty exchanging low-voiced remarks in bastard German. Through my powerful night-binoculars I saw the Great Peter and Paul Rocks loom up ahead, and fade away astern. After that the Great Alexander Rock appeared, fringed with a thousand breakers that re-echoed with the sound of distant thunder.

Suddenly, from out of the mist and spume, a long black vessel, low in the water, came into view on our starboard tack, battling her way towards us through the boiling seas. She was without doubt, I decided, loaded with ore from Odessa ; her speed of about fifteen knots being far more than was necessary for compliance with the naval regulations in respect to the transport of urgent cargoes. Nearer and nearer the unknown craft drew, until at last I was able to make out her name. She was none other than the ship selected for our purpose by Herr Krusenstern the day we left Odessa, the s.s. *Tchernobog* of the Russian Volunteer Fleet. A minute later she acknowledged our siren's call by showing her special sidelight—two green flashes, followed by a red dot.

Up on the *Rurik's* bridge the mate rang down the engines to half-speed, while presently the yacht's course was reversed and we were heading back again in the direction of Odessa.

Shortly after eight bells the conditions of the weather had changed. A drizzling rain had begun to fall, and banks of fog, driven before a sou'-westerly wind, blanketed the sea. The s.s. *Tchernobog's* for'ard funnel all at once "shot," the result probably of inferior coal, and at intervals great tongues of flame crimsoned the mist and prevented us from losing track of her. With the coming of the fog, my first impulse had been to ask the captain to increase our speed ; but, after a conference with the Greek quartermaster, I realised that Herr Krusenstern knew very well what he was about and had a method of his own. What he planned was to slip a stout steel hawser through the cargo boat's stern-cable, and then, with the two vessels hitched, to dispatch a boarding party headed by myself. Hazardous as the manæuvre was, it was not impossible. The s.s. *Tchernobog* was very much slower than ourselves, and our whaleboat in the rolling sea would be reasonably capable of overhauling her. Thereupon the cargo boat's captain would be compelled to steer his ship to nor'-nor'-west of the Great Odessa Breakwater.

When the moment was at last at hand, there was a muffled crash of steel, and the *Rurik* trembled from stem to stern. The straining cable quivered and ground, and I told myself it was nothing short of madness for a comparative novice to attempt to lead a party across that perilous bridge of slippery metal links and wooden knobs.

The hand-over-hand journey along the chain I managed by some miracle to perform safely ; nevertheless, it was a distinctly shaken and far from dashing leader that tumbled finally on to the s.s. *Tchernobog's* soaking deck. We were

prepared for some show of resistance, and were equipped with revolvers and knuckle-dusters; but the first of the cargo boat's hands whom we encountered announced that the ship carried only a skeleton crew. To the outraged and somewhat bewildered captain I showed my Russian credentials, and explained that the act of piracy was in reality part of a special piece of Intelligence work. The man, however, who was a simple and typical seaman, disliked the very sound of my calling, and his instinctive mistrust must have been all too darkly confirmed with my instructions for the later scuttling of his craft.

The return journey to Odessa was without event, and in little more than an hour both ships were anchored four nautical miles off the Roadstead Mole, at one end of the Great Odessa Breakwater. There the fog was considerably thinner, and the moon, like a huge red lantern, shone brightly ahead of us. From the direction of the s.s. *Tchernobog* unseen boats could be heard putting off and rowing away towards an invisible shore. Some fifteen minutes afterwards the abandoned cargo boat blew up with a tremendous explosion and a lurid blaze of flame. The first of the dynamite charges lifted the bow of the vessel half out of the water with a loud whistling of escaping steam, and snapped her anchor-cable, and the three remaining charges split open her hull from end to end and plunged her straightway beneath the surface amid a mushroom-shaped curtain of spray. Herr Pastor Rottkopf's proposed bottling-up of the Russian destroyer flotillas in the Odessa harbours had been satisfactorily accomplished.

For the best part of an hour the *Rurik* raced away to the north-west, following a general course towards Sebastopol. We caught glimpses of the rugged Crimea coastline, but kept well off the main passenger-boat route. In so far as I was concerned, I had played my part, but sheer physical weariness kept me on deck. Presently I heard the captain's cabin door open, and after that steps ascending the companion-way. There was a pause, and then followed a low-voiced, unintelligible conversation in German between two men, ending in a sudden huge chuckle of mirth.

The wind shifted, and the yacht was whipped with streaks of icy spume. All at once, then, there sounded out of the darkness the faint beat of a ship's engines—foreign engines, as my ear with its service training told me.[1] Through

[1] During my general military training at the War Academy in St. Petersburg, I received a course of instruction in naval engineering from Engineer-Captain Alexander Korniloff, an expert in different makes of foreign engines.

my glasses, after a little, I was able to make out about a quarter of a mile away two grey shapes; one large, the other much smaller. As the *Rurik* made a semicircle to escape the terrific backwash of the two vessels' propellers, the shapes grew into cruisers, the *Goeben* and *Breslau*. At the sight the whole of the yacht's German crew seemed to go raving mad. Cheers, yells, songs, oaths burst out on every hand, and with a sudden whistling screech the ship's siren joined in the welcoming din. The next minute the beam of a searchlight shot forth against the sky, moved in a slow arc, and focussed itself upon us. With that the *Rurik's* supplementary hurricane siren sounded, with pauses of varying duration between its blasts. The battleship's searchlight winked and went out, and the cruisers swept silently past. I watched the two swift grey outlines steaming until they were parallel with the coastline, and then for quarter of an hour came crashing salvos of gunfire. The silence that followed was so profound that the whirr of seagulls' wings overhead sounded clear and sharp, like the spinning of innumerable wood and leather prayer-wheels. The cruisers altered their course to nor'-nor'-west, and presently vanished into the blue haze of the dawn-calmed sea.

I entered my cabin, and tried to force myself to laugh. So this was the scientific, much-vaunted and carefully planned naval raid on Odessa! All the cruisers had done was probably to dislodge a few cliff-rocks, hit a Tartar seaboard village, or set fire to a coastguard fuel store, and from now on they must run the gauntlet of the lurking submarines, the destroyers and the newest battleships of Admiral Koltchak's Fleet.

For a space anger and uneasiness were paramount in my thoughts. But then I began more calmly to consider the situation, and to ponder the possibility of this seemingly insensate demonstration covering some other move. There might lie in the background some highly secret scheme directed against the Russian Black Sea Fleet itself, and thereby giving the signal for the German colonists' revolt and the defection of the south. The idea occurred to me that the object of the Turkish-German cruisers' commanders might be to attempt to draw out the Russian naval forces by a bombardment of the coastal lighthouses and lightships. And, with that, in a flash I remembered the sectional map of the newest Black Sea lighthouses that I had seen in the captain's cabin the night the *Rurik* sailed, with the diagram of the Balaclava Lighthouse circled with blue copying pencil. And I recalled, too, the tell-tale smudge that just before he left me I had

noticed on the second finger of Herr Pastor Rottkopf's right hand.

There was a knock at my cabin door, and I opened it, expecting to see the ship's cook with some hot food. Instead, however, I found Herr Krusenstern, who gruntingly informed me that we were close in to land. I inquired if he was touching at Sebastopol, but he offered with a grin to land me at Bir-Kerle, a Tartar fishing village twenty miles from that town. His reason, he added, was that he was scuttling the *Rurik* to obliterate, in so far as possible, the part played by the owner of the yacht in the raid.

I had perforce to accept the captain of the *Rurik's* offer, and on my arrivel at Bir-Kerle I went to the dwelling of an old acquaintance of mine, Panas Kotopouz, a Russian deep-sea fisherman and one of the best *vodka* smugglers to the lighthouses of the coast. Kotopouz was ordinarily a man of few words, but upon my asking him to help me in getting to the Balaclava Lighthouse he was voluble enough. He declared that he had no boat available for the purpose, every *barochka* he possessed being engaged in the catching of sturgeon and cat-fish ; and he backed up his refusal with a wealth of superstitious lore in an attempt to deter me from my project. Upon my offering a hundred roubles, however, I secured a light Greek ketch, with peculiarly-shaped sails designed to ensure speed. The vessel was Kotopouz's most famous smuggling *barochka,* and with it went his three stalwart sons, Grishka, Mishka, and Tishka.

Before we sailed, Kotopouz offered up the usual prayer to St. Nicholas the Sailor, after which his weather-beaten old face twisted itself in an explosion of sardonic laughter. In event, he chuckled, of our requiring the services of a priest at the end of our freakish journey, we should find a very holy man on the spot and waiting for us. Herr Pastor Rottkopf, it seemed, was even then at the Balaclava Lighthouse, in pursuance of his duty as Vicar on Waters in the region of the Black Sea.

IV

FOG was everywhere. It clung in great wet patches about the rocks, giving to them the semblance of bearded sea giants, intensified the mysterious stillness brooding over the uncharted sand-banks, and muffled the seagulls' cries.

The problem, of course, that went revolving through my mind was that of Herr Pastor Rottkopf's presence at the Balaclava Lighthouse. The truth seemed to dawn upon me

only after some little time, and in an entirely spontaneous fashion.

Not so many years back the armoured Government launch, *Slava*, while pursuing the Greek smuggling ketch, *Panagia*, through a dense fog, was smashed to pieces near Balaclava, and all its hands perished. On that occasion the lamps of the Balaclava Lighthouse, which carried to a distance of ten miles, had gone out owing to a sudden stoppage in their feeding-tanks, and the wreck of the *Slava* was magnified into a national disaster. History often repeats itself, and now on a grand scale I saw in that former event the likely solution to my puzzle. It might well be that the Odessa raid had been staged with the idea of drawing out from Sebastopol Admiral Koltchak's Black Sea Fleet. By skilful tactics, the Turkish-German cruisers might engage the clumsy and for the most part antediluvian Russian vessels in a running fight, and lead them into the vicinity of the Balaclava Rocks. And then, if Rottkopf's mission to the lighthouse had been to tamper with the lamps, the heavy Russian battleships might dash themselves to dreadful destruction.

A little later I saw with a start a blue and red glare shining through the fog ahead of us, and realised that it came from the general direction of the Balaclava Lighthouse. For a moment I stared half incredulously, the fabric of my previous fine theory collapsing like a house of cards.

The guiding light continued to shine out, and in about an hour's time our ketch anchored abreast of the towering rock on which the lighthouse stood. Beneath the weird illumination of the lamps high above, a huge white-topped breaker appeared rushing towards the coast, the wind whistling and roaring through its sandy foam as it vanished into the fog beyond. Suddenly, then, like the snuffing of a candle, the lamps were extinguished.

Telling Kotopouz's sons to remain by the boat, I sprang on to the ledge that served as a landing-stage, and began to ascend the narrow spray-damp steps cut in the face of the rock. The lighthouse itself was perched three hundred feet above the sea, and I had a difficult climb. Spurts of icy wind buffeted me, until a strange numb dizziness began to fill my brain. On reaching the summit at last, I made my way past the oil-shed on a big cement platform, and in through the main door of the lighthouse tower.

Amid pitch darkness I paused, listening, but could hear no unusual sound. With that, of a sudden, the silence was split asunder by a drawn-out cry, a scream of stark and

mortal terror. For an instant I remained, rooted to the spot, and then, swinging half-round, I shot the long beam of my flashlight about until I had located the stairway to the lamp-room, up which I darted stealthily.

The entrance to the lamp-room was a circular hatch in, roughly, the centre of the floor, and, pulling myself through as quickly as I could, I cast a swift glance about me. All of the seven huge revolving prismatic lamps had been smashed, and in his bunk lay the lighthouse keeper, blood trickling through his parted lips. The man was stone dead, the wound in his skull looking like a cracked red tinsel star placed against a white cloth. In another bunk, and immediately below the wedding photographs of the couple, was stretched the lighthouse keeper's wife, who died as I bent over her.

I extinguished my flashlight, and backed against the wall. In my hand was my service .38, and I held myself ready to shoot at sight. The gale whined through the regulation *samovar* vent-pipe, and rattled the grille of the cooking-stove in its fire-proof corner. Sliding along the wall, I reached the closed door of the store-room, and listened at the thin planking. A faint sound reached me, and, as I switched on the electric lamp hanging over the provision chart, I heard from inside the store-room the clang of a metal door, leading presumably to the observation gallery beyond.

The next minute the store-room door was flung open, and Rottkopf himself darted out into the room. He struck swiftly at me with his right, and, embarrassed by my revolver attached by its butt-strap to my wrist, I parried and retaliated with my left. Backwards, right across the room, I drove him. He strove to guard himself against my headlong attack, but I got in a number of body blows that fetched from him sharp, whistling grunts, and then we cannoned against the far wall and broke a little apart. With a lightning movement Rottkopf fired from his hip, and before he could get in a second shot I had planted a bullet squarely between his eyes.

From a can of tepid water standing near at hand I drank greedily, and, somewhat revived, I descended and fetched Kotopouz's sons from the boat. Out on the observation gallery I found a dozen tar-barrels, together with a pile of pressed *makoucha* cakes with their natural store of linseed oil, and these I directed the boatmen to stack facing towards the south. I calculated that from there, when the barrels and cakes were set burning, the fire would be visible from every quarter save that of the north, which faced inland.

Slowly the night gave way to the first glimmering of dawn, and the fog began to lift. The impromptu beacon

was burning well, and Mishka, Tishka and Grishka worked with a will, maintaining the blaze. Cotton waste, fragments of driftwood, furniture, blankets, and dried seaweed used for cooking, went to swell the foundation of tar-barrels and *makoucha* cakes. Suddenly, then, from out of the grey obscurity seawards, a blinding flash dimmed the morning stars and a hollow roar seemed to shake and rock the firmament. After that bedlam was let loose; flashes and concussions succeeded one another; shells shrieked and whistled through the air, some plunging into the water below amid cascades of spinning foam, and others exploding against the rocks with a sound like the striking of enormous metal-tipped hammers.

Out at sea the fog still hung above the crests of the waves, nevertheless presently I saw again the two slate-grey outlines of the Turkish-German cruisers, *Goeben* and *Breslau*. They were steaming at full speed, and headed due south. Not more than half a cable's length behind them, like a swarm of angry wasps, came the Russian destroyers, while a little way to the left there was the giant *Georgy Pobiedonosietz*, Admiral Koltchak's flagship.

The firing soon became general, but both the pursuers and the pursued passed at a careful distance from the jagged Balaclava Rocks. Seen from the lofty observation gallery of the lighthouse, the rocks immediately beneath appeared etched in vivid scarlet from the reflections of the leaping conflagration above. After the enemy cruisers and the Russian destroyers had passed, we watched the whole of the Black Sea Fleet go by in full battle formation. As I stood, away up overlooking the scene, like a spectator of some mighty pageant, I thought how that my final theory as to the hidden purpose of the Berlin High Command in the matter of the so-called Odessa naval raid had been right after all.

When the last ship had faded from sight into the thinning mists of the dawn, my quartermaster, Mishka Kotopouz, pointed down with the stem of his pipe towards a fast naphtha launch, flying the Sebastopol Port Service Flag, that was approaching the lighthouse. It was high time we took our departure. Three dead bodies, seven smashed lamps, and general ruin and confusion would be hard to explain, and explanations in the work of a double spy were the last thing to be desired. . . .

Three days later, after we had anchored at Sebastopol, I was told by the quarantine authorities that an abortive attempt by the local German colonists to stir up a general revolt had been crushed by the Siberian Cossack Brigade.

THE SOVIET SPY

ANONYMOUS

I SHALL introduce myself to the readers of this book as Ivana, the Soviet agent. Probably quite a number of them who read the papers already know something of the evil deeds which the English journalists have attributed to me during the last eight years but I am by no means such a dangerous woman as the English try to make me out.

The crusade against the Soviet Union began in 1917 when France and England made a treaty to divide up Russia between them. This was the reason why we were compelled to organise our defences against European chauvinism and imperialism.

Certain English politicians had a plan of campaign ready for use against us in 1924. They wanted to mobilise old General Wrangel once more and invade the Baku oil area with a White Russian army. At first we thought this scheme incredible, but information filtered in to us from all quarters that the Royal Batavian petroleum combination was supporting this plan financially. We therefore had to look into the matter. I was sent to London. There a confidential agent reported to me that General Wrangel had come over from Brussels and conferred for long periods with these politicians and the chairman of the Royal Batavian Petroleum Company. Wrangel then went back to Brussels, after which he travelled to Paris, where he was now engaged on his preparations.

I nosed round for several days and heard the same tale everywhere. I found that I could not get at the facts of the swindle, for I made certain that it was a swindle which had been launched on its career for a specific purpose.

One evening I went off to Paris, where I spent a day in vainly endeavouring to trace the affair to its original source. But on the following morning I was reading the hotel news in a boulevard paper while I ate my breakfast and learnt that Colonel Tuckertown, who was employed by the British Home Office, had taken up his quarters at the Hotel Bristol. At once an idea flashed through my brain—the Home Office is ruled by Joynson Hicks, who is certain to be involved in any plot against us.

So Tuckertown was my man. I had to go and call on him. That same afternoon I visited the Hotel Bristol as Madame Olga Zschep, the wife of a Czech landed proprietor, and managed to secure a suite of rooms next to that occupied by Colonel Tuckertown. It was soon no matter of chance that the blonde Olga was always visible in the corridor whenever he happened to be leaving his room.

Tuckertown responded to the hint, and one evening we went to the opera together. I soon noticed that he liked to see a bit of life; we went on to a cabaret, and did not return to the hotel until after 3 a.m.

The colonel's visit to Paris was an official one. Every day he called on the British embassy or French ministries, but he always hurried back to spend his leisure time in paying attentions to Madame Olga. One day I found opportunity to peruse his papers while he was out of his room for a short period and found among them some anti-communist information which the British Home Office had sent over for the benefit of the French Ministry of the Interior. It was really most careless of him to leave it about. At tea that afternoon he informed me with great regret that he had to return to London the following day. He was anxious to know how long I proposed to remain in Paris, but with a modest blush I replied that it was my dearest wish to see London. I said I had always felt greatly attracted to England but never found an opportunity to visit the country.

"Then come along with me, madame," he exclaimed, beaming with joy. "You will make me the happiest of men."

The consequence was that he took my passport to the British embassy that very day and procured me a permanent visa for England, together with a special letter of introduction in case I should ever cross the Channel unaccompanied.

The following morning we left for London. During the night I wrote a letter to one of our residential agents there, giving him directions for the co-operation I required during my indefinite sojourn in England. I asked him to look out for me every afternoon at 5 p.m. in the neighbourhood of a certain tube station, adding that he was not to worry if I did not appear every day, but to report to headquarters if I did not show up for three days in succession.

I put all compromising documents I had about me into an envelope, which I sent to a Paris cover-address to be kept until required. I took an extra passport with me in case

I should find it impossible to get out of England with the one I was using. I put the Paris letter into the hotel letter-box that night and found an opportunity to post the London one the next morning at the station.

I will not go into too many details. Suffice it that Colonel Tuckertown's cottage was a fine house surrounded by gardens. I was given two rooms in a side-wing, which were very suitable for my purpose as from the windows I could keep a watch on both the drive leading up to the front door and the garden at the back. These rooms were opposite the colonel's bedroom and study, the doors of which were always open.

The day after we arrived, the colonel went off to London. I wanted to rest, but about noon I saw that the housekeeper and manservant were in the back garden, while the other members of the staff were in the kitchen. The next moment I was in the colonel's study, where I took a cautious but thorough look round. One never knows when such peeps may not be useful ; on this occasion I found several portfolios which seemed to contain important papers, but left them untouched.

On the second day of my visit I went to London with the colonel who was most attentive and begged for permission to accompany me on my sight-seeing trip. I got rid of him at last by reminding him of his duties, and we arranged to meet at a well-known restaurant for dinner.

I met our agent punctually at 5 p.m. at the appointed rendezvous. I told him that I wanted to be at work all the next three days and would probably be unable to keep in touch with him, but would like him to be there at the usual hour in case I came. I asked him to get me a ticket for the Hague and to have a reliable car waiting for me from the third day onward.

I duly found the colonel waiting in the hall of the restaurant. I assured him that I had passed a most satisfactory day and gave him a lively account of all the sights I had seen.

I now deliberately turned the conversation into the direction I wanted by telling the colonel that I had read something in the newspaper about trouble in the oil market which was apparently caused by Russia, adding that my late husband had left me a number of shares in oil companies, on which I had lost a lot of money. All our Russian investments were now valueless.

I asked him what was happening and whether I could

do anything with my shares. By the look of confidence which appeared on his face, I judged I had touched on a subject in which he felt himself very much at home.

"You have no idea, madam, how sly these Russians can be. They are now beginning to spoil our market by exploiting the oilfields they have stolen and selling Russian petrol and benzine below cost price. We are afraid they are arranging to sell their oil in England. We have therefore let certain rumours get about that General Wrangel is raising an army to annex the Baku oilfields, and we have proof that it has hit the mark and put the fear of the Lord into the Soviet bosses. They are even ready to believe that the British oil companies are ready to finance a war against Russia. You will be astonished to hear what the Moscow people have done to injure us. Only to-day I got word at our ministry of a bit of news that has come through from Washington. The Soviet Government have made an agreement with the American Standard Oil Company—our competitors—and are going to supply them with petrol and benzine which they will not only sell in the English markets, but even in England itself."

"Yes, but colonel," I interrupted in feigned astonishment, "can't you do anything against Russia? What about Wrangel's army?" "No, it's not quite so easy," he replied. "But we are trying to come to an understanding with the other countries that feel their interests have been injured by Soviet politics, and if we succeed we'll start a world campaign against Russia. The evidence we have obtained in Paris has induced us to close up the Russian trade organisation known as Arcos. The Ministry was in communication with Scotland Yard to-day, and we are arranging for a sudden raid on Arcos, which will probably come off in about ten days' time. We are curious to see what evidence we'll find there and whether we shall get any explanation of the game these Russians are trying to play over here."

The colonel pointed to the papers on his table which referred to this action and told me that he would be working on them for the next few days, adding that he was going to London the next morning but would be back early because he wanted to go over the papers at home. On the following day, however, he would be at liberty to show me some of the sights of London.

After this conversation I began to devise my plans for the morrow. It seemed advisable to curtail my stay in London. When I parted from the colonel the next morning

I sought out our secret headquarters, where I procured a special camera and then went straight back to the cottage.

All the servants were at work downstairs. I told the housekeeper that I had a headache and wanted to lie down for a while. But not long afterwards I was extremely busy, for I purloined the colonel's attaché-case from his study and hastily photographed its most important documents in my room. All the time I had to keep watch on the drive in case he suddenly arrived home.

Just before one o'clock the colonel came, but by then I had secured about a hundred and thirty feet of photography. I left his study as tidy as I found it.

The housekeeper told him of my early return. He promptly sent her up to my room to inquire how I was, but I replied that I preferred to remain lying down so as to be quite fit for the morrow. The colonel then sent another message that he was going back to London at three and would not be home again till late as he had to attend a conference at the ministry.

As soon as he had left, I ascertained that he had taken the portfolio back with him. I therefore began to photograph the documents I had previously discovered in the study.

At five o'clock I had finished the job. I stowed the camera away in my small handbag and rang for the housekeeper. When she appeared, I told her that I could see no likelihood of getting relief unless I had my usual prescription made up by some chemist. I announced my intention of going off to London at once, but thought that I should be back within an hour or so.

As it was long past the hour of five, I had no chance of finding our agent at the usual meeting place and so went off to our secret headquarters, where I had my photographs developed and gave instructions that the negatives should be sent to Paris the following morning in charge of a special courier.

The previous day I had made arrangements for a telegram to be sent to me "poste restante" from Paris, It was to announce the illness my daughter in Prague and request my immediate return. I collected this wire and retired to my room again and packed my bags so as to be ready for departure.

At breakfast the next morning the colonel said he had heard of my trip to London and expressed his pleasure at seeing from my appearance that I was feeling quite well again. I thanked him for the compliment; in the course

of the further conversation he then informed me that the raid on Arcos was due to take place on one of the next few days because the government were afraid the Russians would get wind of the business through one of their many spies who infested London. He hoped the authorities would soon be able to put a stop to that sort of thing.

I could not help wondering what Tuckertown would have said if he had learnt at that moment that I had already warned Arcos in good time and that all the proofs the English wanted were already on their way to Paris. But he did not know these things, and so we finished our breakfast in peace.

About ten o'clock I accompanied the colonel to London, having previously arranged for my agent to pick us up at the Metropolitan station and follow us everywhere. Another agent was standing by to help when we arrived in London ; I saw him dressed as an outside porter, hanging about outside the station.

I told the colonel I had to go to the post office to see if anything had been sent on for me. When we arrived there, I asked at the counter and managed to extract from my bag the telegram I had obtained the day before. I opened it and read its contents to the expectant colonel.

He was most sympathetic and tried to allay my fears, suggesting that if I wanted to stay in London a few more days, I might wire an inquiry to Prague in the hope of obtaining better news. But my increasing anxiety convinced him finally that I would have to go.

On the pretext of some private purchases, however, I went off again unaccompanied at four o'clock, and arranged to meet the colonel at Charing Cross before my train left.

At five I met our agent. He gave me my ticket and told me the photographs were on their way to Paris. Then I met Salamon, the director of Arcos, at another rendezvous, as I had several important bits of information for him. While we chatted, I noticed that a man came past us, took a hurried snapshot and disappeared. I realised at once that a Scotland Yard detective must have followed the director of Arcos and subsequently that the premises were being watched.

We broke off our talk at once and parted, going off in opposite directions, but I had not the slightest doubt that I was now shadowed by Scotland Yard and must escape the sleuths at all costs. I went to a tube station and got into a train. Several stations later I got out and caught a train going in the opposite direction. Then I came to the surface again, took a taxi and went to Charing

Cross, where I ensconced myself in a quiet corner of the waiting room and tried to discover whether I was still watched.

There were only one or two people in the waiting room. I did my best to alter my external appearance by pressing my hat into another shape and rearranging my hair. Then I got another overcoat out of my trunk and put it on.

The colonel was punctual. He led me to the train, settled me in a compartment, and took leave of me with a gallant kiss of my hand. Then he waited on the platform until the train went off; I saw two Scotland Yard men hovering in his vicinity, but they took no notice of us. I also observed our two agents hanging about.

"Bon voyage!" called out the colonel, as the train began to move. A few moments later it had left the station. I likewise experienced no difficulty with the passport officers when I left England's shores.

A fortnight later I was back in England, and on this occasion I actually helped Scotland Yard to arrest one of our agents.

He had remained in London, but was denounced to the police by an English employé who lost his job when Arcos was closed down. I was about to visit him with two of our agents, meaning to carry him off in our car and settle him in a safe lair in another part of London, but as soon as we reached his street I noticed two Scotland Yard detectives watching the house. I called out to our driver not to stop; we went on and made our preparations to rescue him as soon as we were out of sight.

I left the car and watched the proceedings from a distance. One of our agents took the seat next to the driver's, while the other remained at the back. Then the car drove up to our man's address; the two agents got out, and one of them accosted the detectives, to whom he introduced himself as Inspector X. of Scotland Yard. He asked whether the wanted man was at home and received an answer in the affirmative.

He then ordered one of the detectives and our other agent to enter the house with him, leaving the second detective on guard outside. Upstairs he met the shadowed agent, whom he solemnly arrested. He then ordered the detective to search the premises, whereupon a number of papers and photographs came to light; when these had been made into a parcel, all four persons left the house. The false inspector took the arrested man into the car and

ordered the two detectives to report at headquarters immediately. Our second agent sat down beside the driver again, and as the car drove off I saw the two detectives calmly ambling off to a tram halt. Our amateur inspector had a stroke of bad luck that day, however, because he lost the special badge which identified his rank at Scotland Yard. It is very hard to get hold of such badges.

VENGEANCE IS MINE

By

S. T. FELSTEAD

One of Germany's modern master-spies, Theisen, was a Belgian, born in the little town of Arlon, which is on the borders of Luxembourg. Ambition stirred his soul early, and he migrated to Paris, the Mecca of the intellectual youth of his day. There, after vainly tramping the streets for months in search of employment, he found a post as Paris representative of a German newspaper correspondent in Brussels who wanted him to read the French papers, and forward anything likely to be of interest to people in Berlin.

This, of course, was only a beginning in the art of espionage. Whatever Theisen could read in Paris, his German employer could read in Brussels. Paris, after all, was but a few hours' journey from the Belgian capital, and the newspapers from Old Lutetia reached Brussels twice a day. According to Theisen, he sent nothing more than what he found in the French Press, though this statement becomes suspect in the light of what happened a year later.

One Sunday morning, in mid-winter, Theisen was sound asleep when he was aroused by a loud knocking at his door.

Theisen jumped out of bed, thrust his trousers on, and opened the door, to find himself confronted by two men in tall hats and morning coats buttoned up to their chins. As they also carried pistols in their hands, it was easy to see that something serious was in the air. One of them seized his right arm, the other the left, while they both ejaculated · "M. Pierre Theisen?"

"Certainly. But what do you want?"

"We are police officers. We have come to arrest you."

"Arrest me! Aren't you making a mistake? What have I done to be arrested?"

"Wait a moment. Inspector Dulac is coming and will tell you."

In fact, M. Dulac, Inspector of the magistrates' police, came in almost immediately. He was closely followed by a person whom Theisen learned later was Captain Henry, chief of the special police.

"Here is my sash of office," said the inspector, pulling

a bit of an old sash, once tricolour, out of his pocket. "I have come to arrest you for espionage. And here is the warrant."

At the same time he showed him a paper on which Theisen read: "Reason for the arrest: Espionage," and underneath the magistrate's signature: "Couturier."

"You are arresting me for espionage?" Theisen said to the inspector. "What on earth can I have spied?"

"I don't know that. You will be told later. For the moment we are going to have a search round here. If you want to assist us in our task, give us all your letters and papers."

"Letters!" cried Theisen. "I hardly ever get any. You will, however, find a few in the blotting-pad on the table with all my papers."

"You also take many notes in the room in which you spend the daytime. Where are they?"

"I am not in the habit of making a collection of my notes. Those that I do not add to my letters, I destroy after finishing my correspondence."

"That's unfortunate for you. But you have received letters other than those which we find here. Where are they?"

"No doubt I have received other letters, but I am not in the habit of amassing old papers. I destroy them."

"Oh! All that is very unfortunate for you—very unfortunate. For what paper do you correspond and with whom?"

"Excuse me," said Theisen, "I should like to know first of all what crime I have committed before continuing this examination. When you arrest some one for theft, you tell him at least what he has stolen and when he stole it. You are arresting me for espionage. What have I spied?"

"We cannot give you details yet. But it appears that the authorities possess documents very compromising to you. You are in correspondence with an officer of the German General Staff. We have seized letters which prove this. You would be better to confess at once and tell us the names of your accomplices. In this way, you would benefit by Article 10 of the law on espionage; that is, you would be set at liberty at once."

"You are making a mistake," exclaimed Theisen. "I have never had any communication with any German officer, either directly or indirectly, and I haven't the faintest idea as to what you want of me. I defy you and the court to produce such letters, unless they are forgeries. I am a

journalist, and I have had nothing to do with anything except newspapers since I came to Paris."

On this reply the inspector withdrew for a short conversation on the landing with the captain, who had not uttered a word during this dialogue. Then they came back and M. Dulac ordered his two subordinates to take Theisen to the police station.

While questioning him, they searched him thoroughly and afterwards allowed him to dress. His purse containing about fifty francs alone was returned to him. All the rest remained at the disposal of the law.

They made a parcel of all the old newspapers, of which his room was full. They also bundled together a heap of other odd things belonging to him and then asked him to accompany them downstairs, where a carriage was waiting, and from there they went off to the police station.

. . . .

Who was the officer of the German General Staff for whom he was spying? It seemed that the Brussels correspondent of the papers for whom he worked was in reality an agent of the German Secret Service; it was also alleged that he had really been sent to Paris by people who conducted an espionage bureau at Arlon.

There is no need to dilate on the terrible inquisition which Theisen underwent at the hands of the *juge d'instruction* Couturier.

Finally he found himself before a tribunal, presided over by a judge named Toutée. Then, and not before, did he discover that he was the victim of an anonymous letter; there was no direct evidence against him, no incriminating documents were produced, not one specific fact which would justify him being dealt with as a German spy. He was found guilty and without unnecessary loss of time condemned to six years' penal servitude.

He served his time, buoyed up by thoughts of revenge. If this, he said to himself a million times, is how they treat one in France for doing nothing, then he would give them something to remember him by. At the end of the six years he was released, escorted across the Franco-Belgian frontier, and warned never to set foot in France again.

He had no money, no prospects in life worth serious consideration. Long ago, in the confines of his cell in that terrible prison, he had weighed up the pros and cons of his future. As far as he could see, there was just one thing left for him—that was to go to Berlin and offer his services to the German General Staff.

The French had condemned him for being a German spy; now he would turn spy in earnest and devote the remainder of his existence to the revenge he deemed to be his due. Before France had finished with him she would have cause to rue the day she had unjustly and illegally thrown him into a prison.

. . . .

It took him some time to gain the ear of those officers on the Great General Staff to whom he might be useful. They naturally suspected a French plot, and it was only after volunteering his services and executing several small missions to their satisfaction that they gradually extended their confidence.

Over a period of fifteen years Pierre Theisen was the formidable master-spy responsible for the corruption of innumerable French officers. The Germans established him in a bureau in Brussels—thus enabling him to operate on neutral territory—from which he systematically set about the maintenance of a German spy system in France, which must have wreaked incalculable damage.

Theisen's last great exploit took place in 1912. One day in that year, a French engineer officer from Belfort, a fortified town near the then German frontier, arrived at St. Louis (which at that time was German), and handed him a certain document, in the presence of two German officials.

He examined the document, was satisfied of its authenticity, and had it photographed. After this had been done he paid the bearer a sum of money and he went away.

This was the crime for which the French Government condemned him to perpetual imprisonment, under Article 76 of their penal code, although he had not actually set foot in the country.

. . . .

With the passing of General von Schlieffen from the Great General Staff in Berlin, Theisen's services began to fall into disuse. The egregrious Von Moltke who succeeded Von Schlieffen had few, if any, qualifications other than being the nephew of the great Von Moltke who had made the German Army.

He did not like Theisen, who eventually left Germany for good, taking up his abode in Brussels with a little money he had saved. He was still a Belgian subject.

To find an occupation at his time of life was not easy. He knew no trade, and in desperation he opened a garage in the Rue de Couronne.

The Great War came, and he wondered what fate would

overtake him. He was not left long in doubt. Some three or four days after the German troops had invaded Belgium a detachment of police came into his garage—it was about ten o'clock at night—and asked for him. He came out of his office and a lieutenant of the gendarmerie said: "You are my prisoner. Will you come with us quietly, or must we handcuff you?"

There was no alternative. Within fifteen minutes Theisen was lodged in the prison of St. Gilles, and there he remained, unable to obtain any satisfaction, for ten or twelve days.

The days passed by and panic descended upon the Belgians. Nearer and nearer came the German armies to Brussels, but any hope Theisen may have held about escaping by this means was doomed. He found himself one morning being taken to Bruges, where he was put into a cell with a lot of other unfortunates who were the victims of spy mania.

They did not keep him long, however. From Bruges he was escorted to Ostend, and there he had a full view of a country in panic. As he went through the town he was jeered at, spat upon, and had refuse thrown at him; it was a relief to board the steamer that was to take him to Folkestone.

The destination was Frimley in Surrey; there he was taken to be interned.

But to be without news of his wife made him ill with worry. Every day he sent her a long letter which he posted in the camp's letter-box, with the hope that at least one would reach her; but it was all in vain.

He passed his days walking in the courtyard, or in a large corridor if it was rainy weather, discussing the war, making suppositions, analysing the false news items picked up at the camp, and especially making wishes for a timely peace.

On the 16th of November an escort of soldiers came to take him to the prison of Reading. Here he found himself in a large gaol with real criminals. Each week he was visited by a member of the board of prison supervisors. One by one, Theisen and his fellow-prisoners were sorted out. Only five of them were left when, on the 10th February, 1915, they were transferred to the prison of Brixton in London.

Theisen did not guess at that time his selling value and that he was reserved for a profitable transaction. The negotiations with the police of Paris, the secret police, were already in full swing concerning him.

The days went on and Theisen's plight grew no better. He realised by now, if not before, that he was doomed. Whispers reached him; he had become an object of curiosity. With the arrival of Easter, 1915, the blow fell. The Belgian

Government wanted him. He was to be taken over to Le Havre, to face retribution. Unconditionally he was to be delivered to the vengeance of the Paris police.

An escort came for him: two men who watched him with cat-like intensity, no doubt having been told he was a valuable prize of war. He found himself in the city gaol at Le Havre and after being kept there three weeks, faced the court-martial which had been prepared against his coming.

The principal charge against him was the matter already mentioned—the photographing of a secret document which had been handed to him at St. Louis three years before

For four days his trial went on. His accusers shouted and raved at him, made all manner of preposterous statements, and generally let it be seen that they held him accountable for all the German espionage which had taken place in France ever since they had released him from the Fresnes prison. The only defence he could put forward consisted of his own words; he had no witnesses, no documents. He made application to the Belgian authorities for certain information; no reply came, and he was left entirely to his own devices.

His arrival day by day was the signal for hostile demonstrations. If it had not been for his military guards he might have been lynched. When the trial was over he was taken back to his prison cell to await the pronouncement of the inevitable sentence. It came about a fortnight later, when Theisen was nearly insane with worry.

Instead of death by shooting that he expected, he was informed that he had been condemned to perpetual deportation, nothing short of a living death. He was to go to Cayenne.

He began to lose count of time; it must have been somewhere about the middle of 1915 that a bunch of prisoners were taken away from Le Havre prison, *en route* to the Ile de Ré, the depot where all the convicts were concentrated prior to being placed on board the ships that go to what is commonly known as Devil's Island.

It took them many days to reach the Ile de Ré. They went from one prison to another, sleeping on dirty bags of straw, until they arrived at La Rochelle, worn out through lack of sleep and want of food. One of the prisoners had died *en route*, and the others were obliged to spend the night with the corpse in their cell, which was already too small. Two of the men took the dead body off a camp bed and laid it across the doorway. Only the next day did the guards condescend to remove it.

Theisen was made the principal sufferer during this terrible journey. At all the railway stations, and in the towns they passed through, he was maliciously pointed out to the public by the escorts as a Prussian colonel, the head of the German Secret Service, so that he should have to endure the outrages of the furious crowd.

He was always chained up in the centre of the captives, so that he could not protect himself, and could not use his arms to cover his face from the filth they threw at him. His companions—the murderers and other criminals—had more generosity in their hearts than the crowd who struggled around, howling. They gave him a little tobacco and odd scraps of food that came their way.

At the prison of La Rochelle they waited a matter of three days and were then taken over to the Ile de Ré, a journey of an hour, on an old and dirty boat. So that even then they should not escape, they were chained together in the darkness.

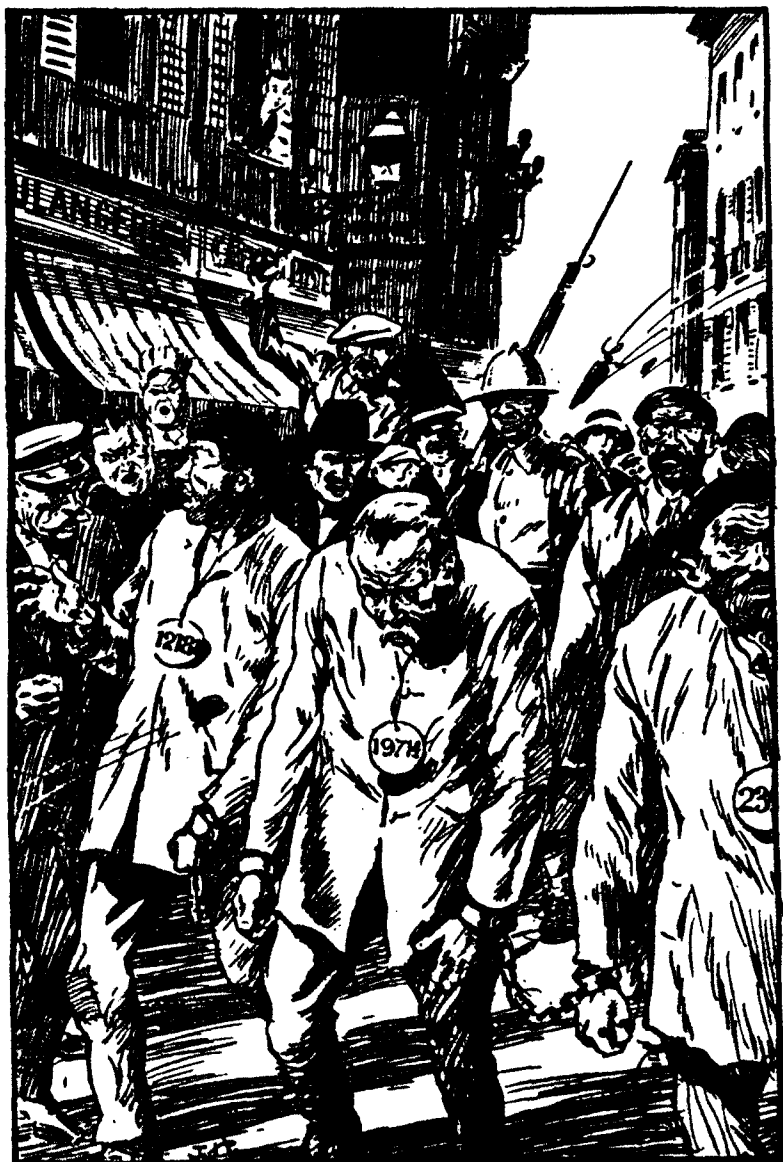
. . . .

In company with some hundreds of other victims of justice, he found himself driven aboard a steamer and then pushed into one of the many cages that ran the entire length of the ship—for all the world like cattle.

It was some time in May before their eyes were gladdened by the sight of palm-covered islands. In dazzling hot sunshine they were put ashore, to be regarded with curious eyes by the ragged creatures hanging around the tiny harbour of the Ile Royale.

A detachment of guards with rifles were drawn up under the command of a little group of officials, while hard by there lay a small steamer which they discovered was to take the majority of them to the mainland a few miles away—to the great settlement of St. Laurent du Maroni, where many thousands of men lay rotting away.

Another strong escort awaited them at the landing-stage of the settlement. They were marched in sweltering heat until they reached a great stone building surrounded by high walls, the place that was to be their abode for they knew not how long. Inside the prison gates they were lined up with their kit-bags and ordered to undress themselves. All their old belongings were removed and burnt, for their condition was indescribable.

Fellow-convicts brought out their new garb—one pair of dirty old linen trousers, once white, and bearing the marks of innumerable patches, a filthy jacket, a ragged old panama hat woven by the natives and bought for a few centimes.

He was always chained up in the centre of the captives so that he could not protect himself, and could not use his arms to cover his face from the filth they threw at him.

By way of concession to the cold nights they had a blanket apiece—but no shoes to wear on their feet during the day.

A few days passed in sorting them out; Theisen, an elderly man, was palpably unfitted for strenuous work in the tropics; but there was no escape. Later on, he ascertained that there were other men accused of espionage in a plight similar to his.

Early in the morning they were marched off to dig ground that had once been a plantation. About half-past ten there was a break, the men were taken back to barracks, fed on soup, and rested until one o'clock, when the labour was resumed until four in the afternoon.

Morning food consisted of coffee and bread. After four hours' labour in the sweltering heat there was soup, a tiny portion of meat, and a loaf of black bread—the latter frequently made from flour swarming with maggots. At two o'clock the roll of a drum signified the return to labour. Half-past four signified the end of the day's toil. They returned to barracks, tired out, and after a meagre supper, composed themselves to rest for the night as best they could.

Theisen had already asked for his case to be reconsidered, but beyond being told that his application would be forwarded to Cayenne, and from there, if it was approved, to Paris, he received no satisfaction. He was not allowed to write to his wife; nor did he know whether she was alive or dead.

They heard whispers of the war, how France was winning one day and Germany the next. Men escaped, some to be brought back in a state of exhaustion, others never to be heard of again.

One day succeeded another. Theisen made another effort towards freedom on the score of his age. This time good fortune came his way. He was transferred to the Ile Royale to do duty in the hospital. Here he could enjoy a few of the amenities of life; the food was better, and an occasional cigarette could be smoked. He asked permission to write a few letters, which was granted him. But whether they ever reached his wife he never knew; there was no reply, and he could only conclude she was dead.

And so the years passed on. He saw men brought back from escape; he saw executions by the guillotine of prisoners who had murdered their fellow-captives in the innumerable quarrels that were always breaking out in the fœtid atmosphere of their sleeping quarters. These executions were occasions for a parade, so that all might see the punishment that awaited those who broke the law of the settlement.

He applied to be treated as a prisoner of war. From

Cayenne there came a message that the Colonial Office in Paris would be communicated with. The reply came back that he had been condemned to perpetual deportation and that his case could not be reconsidered. But one inestimable boon did come his way shortly after the Great War had ended. A letter arrived from his wife to say she was alive and well, and that through the German War Office she was moving heaven and earth to obtain his release. He went about as a man rejuvenated; darkness had come out of the light.

. . . .

Early in the year 1925, when Theisen had more or less abandoned hope of ever regaining his freedom, a letter came from Berlin to say that terms for his release had been arranged with the authorities in Paris. Apparently they considered that he was now too old to do any further mischief.

He had to go to Cayenne itself, to be interviewed by numberless officials. What did he intend to do if he were sent back? Had he any means of earning a livelihood? Would he undertake never to work against France in the future? Did he realise that if he were caught once more he would die in captivity? He could only reply to their questions that he had no plans for the future, that he had no means, beyond writing, of making a living, and he was most certainly willing to give an undertaking to keep out of French affairs for the remainder of his existence.

He had lost. Oh, yes, he fully understood that. Vengeance now had no place in his life. He was the one who had planned an ample revenge and had got eleven years of unspeakable hell. He could consider himself nothing more than a pawn in that stupid campaign of hatred between Germany and France which had brought about two terrible wars, the last of which had decimated Europe and had, incidentally, reduced him to a mere pauper, going back, a man sixty-six years of age, to begin life afresh.

The Cayenne folk were not unkind to him. He received an outfit of clothing to see him home, a little money. Thankfully enough he boarded the steamer that left the port in April, 1925, in company with a good many more unfortunates who had spent some of the best years of their lives paying for the sins of the past.

No longer were they in cages; they could move about the deck of the steamer like free men, go to bed when they liked. A fortnight of this passed by, a period of unspeakable bliss which slowly restored their senses. They arrived at Marseilles, and Theisen expected that he would be permitted to return

to Germany forthwith. Alas, there were more formalities to be complied with. He found himself confined in the prison of Clairvaux wondering what he had done now.

Nothing, it appeared, simply that they wanted to keep him a full ten years. So for two months he had to remain in gaol, writing a few articles that might earn him a little money. One morning, somewhere about the end of June or early July—for he had long lost count of time—he was taken into the governor's office.

"Theisen," he said, "you are to go back to Germany at last. The order has come for you to be sent to Paris. From there you will be put on a train for Berlin, with orders that you do not set foot on French soil again. You will sign an undertaking to that effect."

Late that night Theisen reached Berlin, to find his wife awaiting him at the home of a friend. She did not recognise him, for he had aged thirty years since that memorable evening when he had been taken away from his garage in Brussels. One must draw a veil over the painful scene, which was speedily effaced in the joy of his return.

How to earn a living? The German Government were none too anxious to recognise his services; he was a light of other days, and pensions were being paid on but a meagre scale to the officers of the old regime. Eventually they gave him a pittance, not sufficient to live upon. Desperately he tried to obtain employment of some sort; but he had long since lost all touch with the affairs of the world. The most he could do was a little odd writing, which charitable friends now and again succeeded in placing for him.

But the poverty did not greatly matter. To enjoy his freedom again, to roam around the streets of a night, and to lie abed in the morning if he so wished, was unutterable bliss. He revisited Arlon, the town where he had been born and bred, but there were few people who remembered him.

They passed him by; to them he was still the German spy. If ever he had required a lesson in the fatuity of his life, he realised it then. Forty years had gone by since he had left Arlon, a young man in the very prime of life. Now he was an old, old man. France had revenged herself upon him in the first place. He had retaliated by becoming an arch-spy of Germany—for what? A paltry personal satisfaction which had lasted a few years, and had then brought further vengeance in its train.

THE ADVENTURESS SPY

By
RICHARD W. ROWAN

OF THE many inducements drawing unusual people into secret service, love of adventure is that which always seems to produce the best results. Common as it is for patriot spies to risk, and often lose, their lives, those operatives who are frankly mercenaries, who have no national stake in either preventing or winning a war, but are out to collect all they can, seldom beseech their employers to order them to posts of genuine danger. The adventuress type requires "adventures" to be very strictly interpreted. Cafés, boudoirs and smart hotels, if possible in large, pre-eminently gay and neutral cities, are the luxurious battlefields appealing to those ladies for whom *live in clover* is almost a union rule.

Maria Sorrel was different—an adventuress who was restless, bewitching and knew no fear. This blonde Polish girl sketched in a brief and dazzling career the unsurpassed pattern of an amateur of espionage whose only fault was her curious dread of security. She was, it appears, a professional spy in the employ of Germany some while before the outbreak of hostilities in 1914. She had been active in the Balkans, but had come to no harm, being observed with wary admiration by the political police of Bucharest and other turbulent centres. Whatever she attempted then was no more than reckless apprenticeship. Her comet-like career began in earnest when Russia and Germany sprang to arms, and she seized a chance to lodge herself stealthily in back of the Czar's battalions.

She was at this period rather intimately acquainted with an officer of gendarmerie who afterward found himself accused of treason, tried and condemned to hang. Whatever part the Polish spy played in helping him on toward this disaster has been obscured by time and the revolutionary blotting out of records. Moreover, many persons—including a German chief of espionage who ought to remember it if he sent him bribes—have tried to show that this gendarme colonel, Miasoyedoff, was no traitor but the victim of a typically corrupt Czarist conspiracy. It may even be possible the unfortunate man was proving himself both a loyal officer

and a shrewd one in his relations with Maria, for almost at the outset somebody denounced her to the *Ochrana*.

Warned just in time by an admirer—as so often happened—she managed to escape by putting on a Russian uniform, the first of many occasions when she would choose that convincing disguise. A few weeks after her flight from Gumbinnen she was on duty in Warsaw. Nowhere else throughout Europe, in 1915, were the hired informers and foreign agents more brazenly active than in Poland's capital at the Bristol Hotel. There, for a fact, the combat of the spies was a hand-to-hand encounter.

The city was never far from the Russian front lines. With the transport service already in chaos, most officers when granted leave simply could not hope to make a journey to their homes. But in Warsaw one so inclined might travel at a terrific pace. Military regulations were outwardly respected. Champagne or spirits at the Bristol dare not be served publicly to officers in uniform. Yet a bit less than three hours away were the soggy or frozen trenches on the Bzura; and what reckless young Russian would attempt to forget the hardships awaiting him there without the aid of champagne?

Downstairs the Bristol was a model of decorum, observing the martial law; upstairs at all hours there was every kind of excess. Certain ladies and gentlemen—but ladies especially—offered generous welcome, lavish entertainment, in the suites they appeared to maintain for no other purpose than the heroes' brief relaxations. And second only to the prodigal flow of intoxicants was that other dangerously unguarded stream of army information, rumour and gossip, for which the spies paid in hospitality.

Maria Sorrel now lived at the Bristol, but looked with contempt upon a game of no later vintage than Samson and Delilah. She was lovely to behold and absolutely conscienceless. She was daring, gifted and intelligent. In a sordid atmosphere of vice and treachery, she promptly decided to use another method of beguilement, to strike—amid this war-fevered debauchery—a bewildering new note.

In a society where weary and desperate men mingled with the gay half-world and a scattering of neurotic, effeminate aristocrats, Maria elected to represent pure affection, the family and the home. She soon had as many as thirty young officers abjectly devoted to her, not in itself a world's record for an accomplished agent of her beauty and experience. But she excelled mainly now in persuading eager or homesick youngsters to open their hearts to her as to a near and dear, yet highly sophisticated, female relative. She agreed without

exception to be "like a sister" to these subalterns until the dreadful war should come to an end. After that—perhaps—who could tell?

Each one thought himself the most fortunate of men. Each when he returned to front line duty wrote to Maria again and again, confided in her freely, boasted a little, sought her ready sympathy, complained in a mocking way, thanked her for whatever gifts she had sent, depicting in full his army life, packing in all those minor details so precious to an enemy secret agent.

She would say: "You are very dear to me. I shall want to know what you are doing out there *every minute*. Will you promise to write and tell me about everything?"

Of course he promised and did not forget that he had; and there were many similar promises and many letters from the front reading like diaries. Thus she kept closely informed upon the movements of two-score crack battalions, which meant divisions located, corps, even armies. She learned about their casualties, morale, and generally inadequae supply system. She heard straightway of any fine new war equipment provided by industrial Britain or France, or of sudden, intensive training periods symptomatic of a major "surprise" attack. Through her smitten correspondents the spy rather excelled Russia's frequently languid Ministry of War in looking after the best units under arms.

Maria Sorrel not only caught them young and reminded them of home, she entertained all her uniformed friends extravagantly. In this she matched her competitors, yet was careful to stop far short of the excesses with which the Bristol hummed all night and half the day. She bestowed handsome presents, but argued against drunkenness. She won their complete confidence, seemed unwilling to impose upon it, asked nothing save that they talk about themselves.

Affecting an innocence wholly discredited by her brazen profession, she persuaded more than one young profligate to a better, more wholesome life. She ought to find youths on some "morning after," disgusted, sick and ashamed. She would send the culprit back to his heroic duty, forgiven of course, uplifted by her kindness, bewitched by her charm and camaraderie.

In this, her private process, the artful spy's main concern was for her supply of subaltern's wanting reform. And Warsaw being what it was during the winter of 1914–15, the Sorrel hunting had practically a continuous open season. Too many of the officers of Russia's doomed and valiant regiments considered the war a swift, mad holiday. They

found the Bristol admirably located, since they had to seem to keep in touch with their troops in the line.

Maria's avocation was designed to appear harmless, moral and patriotic. She was clever enough not to be too moral. That would have aroused quick suspicion. She permitted herself a few influential, elderly admirers, since they served to keep her boys sufficiently jealous while at the same time explaining her character to the cynical police. Her pose was scarcely adult ; and though French, British and Germans were already on guard against juvenile espionage, the celebrated *Ochrana*—accustomed to bomb-tossing Nihilists—noted the most dangerous woman spy in residence at the Bristol as the only person there whose candid activities required no special supervision.

This secret agent, well entrenched and certain of her sly attainments, was particularly careful to avoid other, less intelligent spies infesting the Polish capital. She spotted them as soon as she could and studied them thereafter as though it were her sole occupation, subsidised by the Czar. And, being a more than exceptional plotter, she profited at her rival spies' expense whenever she could contrive it.

Among them she noticed a somewhat different and pathetic sort to be found living upon the war at a teeming mart of treachery like the Bristol. Maria called her the Polish Countess, though the woman was an untitled aristocrat, utterly impoverished, about thirty-six or thirty-seven years old. Keeping close watch upon her as a fellow informer, Maria after a while preyed upon her, coming close to her boldest venture in the striking episode which ensured.

The polish Countess was also in contact with the German secret intelligence service. Maria guessed at this, though never informed officially. Germany had lost more than twenty resident spies in Great Britain the very day that war had been declared and did not afterward repeat the blunder of having many agents organised in an extended chain. And so it was that the Bristol alone boasted as many as a dozen spies working independently, whose efforts overlapped, whose findings very often covered the same matters of military interest and could be tested both for truth and timeliness by being checked off against each other. Though no one would confuse Warsaw with a sea-port, there was even an agent of the German Naval Intelligence at the Bristol, perhaps because " I " of the navy and the army of Germany fought a four-year duel that interpreted victory not as a success over the French, British or

Russians, but as something discovered or submitted that seemed likely to discredit the other service.

Maria Sorrel kept an eye on the Countess at work. The Countess noticed the fascinating Maria, was coolly pleasant to her, but never cordial, considering her simply an elaborately disguised demimondaine. The two spies—one of gentle birth, the other sprung from nowhere—in respect to professional ability were like a badly served field-gun opposing a regiment of snipers. The Countess had a gracious manner and a plain, literal mind; her memory was feeble, her character but a fragment of tarnished respectability. Retaining the best social connections, she knew every one in Warsaw worth knowing, and almost daily met and entertained veteran colonels and generals, favourite aides-de-camp to Grand Dukes or other imperial relatives, and staff officers with influence at G.H.Q. Yet few reports from her won applause when deciphered at German headquarters in the East.

Ten years younger than the Polish woman and a century wiser, Maria Sorrel studied her contacts with envy. The undergraduate spy, who had not been trained like Maria by such expert intriguers as Cuers, Thiesen and Steinhauer, was getting hospitably drunk several nights a week with Russians of imposing rank. Even their inebriated babblings should assay more in golden information than any bale of burning letters from junior officers pinned to a narrow sector of the front. But Maria convinced herself that the aristocratic incompetent was systematically passing into oblivion with her more robust guests, excelling most of them in dullness at those moments when a crafty agent would have been sober and as sensitive as a microphone. Maria herself would gladly have traded all her infatuated correspondents for a few well-chosen hours under or in the bed of the Countess.

Having tried in many subtle ways to cultivate her, Maria gained never a hint of an invitation to one of the informal parties given by the Countess. That maturing hostess, if too stupid for espionage, knew enough to sheer off from proposals of youthful competition. It proved much less difficult for the adroit secret agent to secure a little weapon she fancied she might need—a key admitting her to the Polish woman's suite. And that March more than a few elderly officers slept where they had fallen, while the nimble fingers of Maria searched their pockets. . . .

It was thus she came upon the new field cipher just adopted by the Czar's general staff!

Here at last was the harvest of all her watching over and

preying upon the Countess. Yet the kind of thing her subalterns had been revealing never had called for a frantic rush to headquarters ; while to be of great value a copy of the cipher should go forward to her German employers immediately. Maria acknowledged herself unprepared to forward this excellent scoop with the sure expedition it deserved. Her regular channels of secret transmission in and out of Warsaw took the better part of a week. She must try to think of some way to improve upon that.

The owner of the cipher book slept on profoundly in the Countess' parlour. Maria copied the original, returned it seemingly undisturbed. Having time to spare she made two more copies of her copy. Three hours later, or as early as she dared, the spy set forth to take a morning stroll. Some distance from the fashionable Bristol, in a narrow side-street, she paused idly in front of a shop whose proprietor, despite the war, had still an interesting assortment of birds and tropical fish for sale. Maria glanced at a row of four small aquaria holding rare fish, read the price tags lettered in Russian, and then rearranged them mentally, according to the top price, 90 copecks.

What she deciphered from the Polish proprietor's quaint system of piscicultural labels was :

B S L E
I K N M
E V A E
L I M L

or reading from top to bottom by columns :

BIELSK VILNA MEMEL

Impatiently Maria turned back to the Bristol. A spy messenger of the German service, according to the exhibited aquaria, was leaving that day to travel by way of Bielsk and Vilna to the Baltic port of Memel, moving as rapidly as conditions permitted and collecting as he went. Some such " bulletin " was posted daily in many important combatant and neutral centres. Passwords and brief code instructions had often been passed to Maria simply by means of the graduated level of water in a succession of small tanks and aquaria, as well as in bottles and glasses to be seen in a wine-shop owned by another Pole who served the Germans. Occasionally Maria had to enter one or the other of these places ; and to explain her visits to the bird dealer she had

bought a bullfinch which she kept in her hotel room. Longer communications were passed to her in small boxes of seed, or now and again she picked a tiny wad of thin, silky paper from the seed cup of an amiable cockatoo whose perch was at the rear of the shop.

Maria decided to send one copy of the cipher by the Bielsk-Vilna traveller that night, but as she walked back to the hotel she gave thought to ways and means of rushing her paymasters another copy by some more direct, ingenious means. What young aviator with whom she corresponded was on the spot and available—and might be cajoled or tricked into dropping a packet well beyond the German lines? Her aviation contacts had been rather limited, reflecting a condition characteristic of the whole Russian front. Maria was nearing the Bristol again when she chanced to think of K.

This young officer had dined with her only the evening before. As usual he had vowed his eternal devotion. His leave, she knew, had not yet expired. A born romantic, a dreamer and poet, K. was terribly misplaced in an engineer regiment. War as he had been enduring it for months had brought him close to mental desperation. Morbid, irresolute, hopeless, he was ripe for a masterly job of victimising.

Maria had her complete programme boldly in mind even as she sat composing the note that would bring K. in haste to the hotel. Her ideas marshalled themselves like that; and, though her projects were often so incalculably cruel, the speed and directness with which she operated in a crisis extorted the admiration of rivals and contemporaries.

All during the past five days she had been cheering K. and saving him—from himself, as it seemed. But really saving him for this—her most audacious and impudent undertaking! In response to her note the enchanted lieutenant arrived at the Bristol about three-quarters of an hour later. Maria was endowed with such subtlety, she even knew when to be bluntly direct. She gave K. a dazzling smile, yielded him her exquisite hands to kiss. Then she came straight to the point.

"My young brother Michael—I have just learned—has been arrested in Austria," she said, "accused of being a Russian spy because I am living here in Russia. He will be shot unless you can help me save him. I have no one else to turn to. Will you help me, Alexis, and ask no questions?"

"With all my heart! But how?"

"Since we are Poles, we have no true government anywhere that might intercede for us. However, I happen to have friends in Germany, very powerful friends. The

Austrians dare not offend the German staff while German divisions are needed to support the Austrian front. My dear brother will be saved if only I can get this letter taken across to the German lines."

Maria confessed that a powerful German leader—she even ventured to name him—had been her lover before the outbreak of war had caused their complete separation. If a message from her should reach him in time, he would move heaven and earth to assist her.

"I do not love this man any more," she added, "I love only you, Alexis. I suppose I shall be taking an unfair advantage of him. But since it means my brother's life, can you blame me for what I have to do?"

K. assured her that he could not. Nor did he blame her —who confessed her love for him—when she ventured upon her most sublime stroke. For her sake she begged him to desert. That very night he must go over to the German lines with her letter!

After half an hour's discussion the unhappy dupe had committed himself to her project. It dishonoured and exiled him; but all this she vowed to repair in person, just as soon as she herself could get around safely to wherever in Germany he had been taken for internment. Meanwhile, his life would be spared; it was precious to her now, precious as her own brother's. In fact, she was working to save them both from this senseless slaughter. K. would survive the war; and afterward they would be happy together.

K. accepted the tiny packet she prepared for him. It contained a copy of the field cipher. He was eager to start, once he had given her his promise. And so she kissed him and clung to him with what can hardly have been less than genuine affection and gratitude. If he got through the lines he would help to make her the most valued agent in German employ.

However, the young engineer officer was expecting to meet his older brother, an artillery captain, who was due to arrive in Warsaw for a short leave. K. disliked having his brother's precious five-day furlough squandered in futile waiting and inquiry, so he hastily penned a full confession, chivalrously withholding the name of the woman who had compromised him. He sought next—without Maria's knowledge, of course—the intelligent, helpful porter of the Bristol. He handed this man his letter with every sign of extreme agitation, saying: "My brother, Captain Vladimir K., must receive this as soon as he arrives here to-morrow."

Noticing the young man's emotional state, the porter steamed open the letter without scruple of delay, then rushed

it to his friends of the secret police. *Ochrana* agents at once warned the military authorities. K. was removed from a troop train at the first stop outside Warsaw. Before his arrest he gained barely a moment in which to beg a brother officer to telegraph Maria, care of the Bristol, and mention his unavoidable detention.

This gallant warning duly came to Maria ; but before she saw it the wily hotel porter had opened and read it. He at once notified the police that the woman wanted in the K. case had been found. The *Ochrana* bureau and military police hesitated briefly, in order to co-operate and maintain the delicate balance of their interlocking authority in Warsaw. But that brief interval was all Maria required. She was a peasant girl at Bielsk, an old market woman at Vilna, and a sailor at Memel. She somehow escaped from the Baltic port in that masculine disguise, taking a copy of the field cipher with her. It was now merely proof of a curious mischance, having lost all military importance. Because of the copy found upon K., who was exiled to Siberia, the Russians again changed their cipher.

On August 5, 1915, the army of Mackensen occupied Warsaw. The porter at the Bristol was the first resident of the Polish capital to be arrested as a Russian spy, and the first to be condemned and shot.

Maria Sorrel had accepted a brief furlough, then turned to new assignments that particularly suited her. Gustav Steinhauer later observed, "With her it was, chiefly, sheer love of exciting adventure. She would, I think, have spied for either side." But Maria was now pretending to spy for *both* sides. She had declined an offer of transfer to the western front, saying she did not want to become part of any elaborate system of espionage, or operate under the command of a woman, Fräulein Doktor. She had crossed the battle zone clad in a Russian infantry uniform, and, while avoiding the forbidden vicinity of Warsaw, had contrived to interview Rennenkampf, the Czar's commander on the northern front, and persuade him that she could be hired to spy for Russia.

Under her artful guidance an intimacy developed from this meeting, dangerous to the general and his army. When Maria returned to the German lines, she brought information that she could only have secured from the Russian commander or possibly his chief of staff. This expedition across the zone of combat she repeated a number of times, laughing at the objections of officers who admired her personally, or who were concerned for her safety because of the high value

they set upon her independence and audacity in secret service.

She was working directly upon the plan of campaign, supplying invaluable detailed reports of the strength and dispositions of Rennenkampf's forces, conveying to him on her return trips intelligence so shrewdly falsified the Russian was reassured and deceived. Until, on one of her dauntless journeys from German headquarters to the camp of the enemy she had the bad luck to find herself crouching in a ditch towards which Russian skirmishers began suddenly advancing.

Rennenkampf was not alone depending on the reports of Maria and other spies, but had ordered a screen of infantry forward, to try to determine the direction of the Germans' next assault on his front. And in order to sustain the deception Maria's reports were developing, the German strategist, Hoffmann, was meeting the Russian pressure with a resistance gauged to be equally light from flank to flank.

Even while compelled so frequently to pose as a mud-stained front-line soldier, Maria had not been willing to cut off her beautiful hair. She was frankly vain about it; and, with several complete feminine outfits lodged on the Russian side, she knew how much it was admired once she resumed her natural attire. Lying out there in the field, with bullets starting to whine pretty close, the spy's response was sharp exasperation. She understood enough of both armies' plans to know this was not the beginning of an important engagement. But the day was growing brighter; and she had expected to be well on her way before sunrise.

She raised her head a little, quite without fear as usual, surveying her doubtful prospects. On came the Russian infantry. A German sniper at six hundred metres range saw her military cap appearing and took aim at it. His first shot knocked it off—she reached for it anxiously. A second bullet grazed her cheek. The Russians pushed forward, the Germans melting away, according to superior plan. At length the Russians came crowding into the ditch; and an astonished sergeant stood over Maria, whose head was still uncovered, her blonde hair slightly streaked with blood and exposing her masquerade.

A German spy! Her protestations received scant front-line attention; she was removed to a regimental headquarters and then to the town of Lyck. Underneath her grimy uniform she wore silk garments. Her beauty and proud bearing convinced her captors she was no ordinary secret service messenger. Yet when Maria demanded to be taken

at once to the headquarters of General Rennekampf, sceptical jailers considered that sheer bluff. Lovely as she looked, the woman's pretended importance was absurd.

Next day the German attack began. It was skilfully masked, and Maria had worked on that; it struck heavily against the Russian's weakest points, which Maria's intrigue had not only revealed to the German command but also helped to make weaker. It will be seen that her own efforts promoted the tragedy now overtaking her. Rennenkempf's army began falling back, its wings rolling in upon its centre. And all this while Maria's clamour for attention and release was ignored with true Slavic detachment. No underling cared about troubling a beaten army commander in the midst of this major crisis.

In the jail with her at Lyck were six men and two women, all charged with espionage. An irresistible German force was storming the town; under fire from three sides, it had to be evacuated. The Russian provost had no inclination to hamper his retreat by carrying along the nine spy suspects. None of them had yet come to trial, true—but what of it? Each had been caught under most suspicious circumstances. They were certainly enemy agents; and so let them suffer the penalty of spying before the German drive made punishment impossible.

All nine were hurriedly marched out of the jail. Shells were bursting in the town. Several of the prisoners protested —in being taken away at this last moment, they were unjustly exposed to danger.

"But you are not being taken away," a stammering interpreter told them. He explained that in something less than five minutes they were going to be hanged.

Eight of the brutally condemned wretches began to plead for mercy. But Maria Sorrel challenged the provost, speaking in Russian: "Your general will learn what you have done —then you yourself will swing at the end of a rope!"

The officer turned away from her with an oath. He barked at his men, who were fumbling with ropes already prepared. One of them awkwardly slipped a noose over Maria's head. The glorious hair came tumbling down; and her guard had finally to unbind her hands so that she could coil it up again. With a swift gesture, she reached into the bosom of her blouse and took out a gold locket, set with black stones, inside which, when she snapped it open, was revealed a small picture of the Russian commander, Rennenkampf.

To the provost she said urgently, "See this—you will understand what it means. He gave it to me because he loves

me. Only take me to him and he will make you a colonel to-morrow.

"Do you hear? I am no German spy. I have been spying for your general——"

The officer curtly raised his sword.

"You dog——" Maria's despairing rage was cut short as the noose tightened upon her throat. . . .

The nine suspected spies, executed without trial, were swinging from their crude gallows when, an hour later, victorious German companies swept into the town. Because of her daring successes, intelligence officers particularly investigated the circumstances of Maria Sorrel's death. From prisoners they obtained eye-witness accounts which were in such general agreement, they can be taken as authentic.

THE SECRET OF THE SACRED PICTURE

By

COL. VICTOR K. KALEDIN

ON the morning of November 1, 1915, the snow was building a silver *prie-dieu* against the dark, rugged, age-cracked bastions of the Kremlin, and Moscow, city of " one thousand and one hundred and one churches," seemed to be listening to the rising liturgy of bells and the distant market clamour from the large Arbat Square. I was not interested, however, in the picturesque crowd of merchants and pedlars that showed like a swarm of ants against the red brown walls of the Kitay Gorod, the business centre of the town, and was thinking only of the telephone message just received from my Russian chief.

General Batioushin's communication * had been delivered to me by the proprietor of my boarding-house, and was very brief. It merely informed me that my invalid pension would be paid on the first of next month. The decoded message, amplified by the alphabetical dissection of the key-word, said that the usual court intrigues were just then far from normal. In the first place, the powerful *camarilla* revolving round the Grand Duke Cyril, who stood second in the line of the Romanoff succession, had clashed seriously with the person and party of the Tzarina, and there was a growing rumour that the Tzarina planned to dethrone the Tzar, and have herself proclaimed regent until the majority of the Imperial heir, the little Grand Duke Alexis Nicholaevitch. A second and dangerous factor in the situation was a certain elderly foreign diplomat, Monsieur X, who was known to the Russian Intelligence Service as an inveterate enemy of the existing régime. Monsieur X had attacked the Tzar and Tzarina through every possible channel, including that of the Duma, and was the *enfant terrible* of the

* See the story entitled *Private Portnoy's Code Book*, p. 458. General Batioushin, when communicating by telephone with undercover agents, used the Olebal code, which rendered it possible to condense a message of four typewritten pages into so many ordinary phrases by means of a prearranged system of punctuation. In the punctuation there lay a method of trebling each code-word employed, and thus constructing so-called " base words " for the entire message.

Allied diplomatic world since his attacks were always contained in a vitriolic précis which he circulated in the most suitable quarters. In the private opinion of General Batioushin, Monsieur X's final thrust was now to be delivered, in the shape of an especially scandalous précis with which he would seek to poison the minds of the Grand Dukes.

The closing lines of the code message instructed me to intercept the latest précis of Monsieur X at any cost, and regardless of the methods employed. I was also to avoid, in so far as possible, collision with agents of the Personal Court Branch, plain-clothes *fileures* of the Political Police, and *gendarmes* of the Pskov High Headquarters, who would be engaged on the same case.

It was midday by the Kremlin clocks when I reached Gorochovaya Street, and beyond, on the Tverskoy Boulevard, the restaurants were already filling with customers from the business district of the town. Since the Balaclava Lighthouse case I had been out of touch with my German chief, and engaged only upon odds and ends of work for both Russia and Germany in the war zone round about Kieff. A telegram, then, from General Batioushin had ordered me to report to the subdivisional chief of the Seventh Section of the General Staff at Moscow, and, having been told to hold myself in readiness, I had taken as " Colonel Mousin " a room in a cheap and second-rate little hotel, and passed my days drinking beer, playing billiards and an occasional game of cards, and generally leading an aimless loafing existence. Now, therefore, as I passed beneath a stone arcade at the end of Boguslavski Street, I glanced towards a grimy Polish bakery, with a door-sign of enormous wooden angels holding baskets of gilded cakes. The bakery of Ianash Vonsovsky was a useful and an extremely active spy bureau, and stale loaves, prominently marked with the municipal rejection stamp, were invariably piled in the left corner of the window, to indicate that accredited German agents in Moscow could use the place as a " letter-box " for outgoing reports.

My heart quickened its beat, and I had an odd sense, a kind of subtle mental warning, that something definite had occurred inside the bakery. A police trap, perhaps? Then I noticed in the centre of the window a liberal display of *krendely*, sweetened pastry twisted into figures ranging from one to one hundred, and saw the number of my German cipher, " 66," lying beside the number " 44." I had been acquainted with the Polish bakery proprietor, Vonsovsky, ever since the outbreak of the War; none the less, I never guessed him to be in close touch with prominent German

agents. The cipher "44," however, making, when added 8, denoted a man with an important position in the Eighth Section (Central Russia) of the Berlin High Command. And this, coupled with the juxtaposition of my own cipher figures, told me that agent "44," having inside knowledge of my presence in Moscow, was there waiting for me and would continue to wait until I came.

I cast a quick look about me, noted with satisfaction that the street wore a perfectly normal, everyday aspect, and entered the bakery. Vonsovsky, a man of shrivelled complexion and with greasy chop-whiskers, came forward and, after a swift meaning look, conducted me through a door at the back, down a short narrow length of passage, and into his bedroom. There, with some deference, the Pole gestured towards a man wearing a silver otter coat. Unhurriedly the stranger whispered my German cipher, "O.M.66," and then, satisfied by my regulation nod, asked me to sit down.

My unknown *vis-à-vis* had certainly an interesting appearance. His face was hard, with the traditional German duelling scars running down his left cheek, and his expression singularly inscrutable, although with a certain suggestion of ironic bitterness at the corners of his thin lips. In frame he was of wiry build, and gave an impression of having the suppleness and resiliency of a fine steel spring. His clothes were of a costly kind, and seemed the product of a tailor who was accustomed to serve royalty rather than opulent merchants.

After quite shortly identifying himself, agent "44" began to talk. He informed me that early in July, 1914, the Grand Duchess Victoria, wife of the Grand Duke Cyril, had organised a motor tour. Eighteen members prominent in St. Petersburg society, including the foreign diplomat, Monsieur X, started from Pskov, passed through Courland and Livonia, and finished up at Riga. The tour was interrupted by halts at several old Baltic castles, where the distinguished visitors received all the honours of royalty. Monsieur X, however, did not accompany the party as far as Riga, but left it on some pretext and was eventually traced to the castle of Baron von Hertz in Livonia, where he remained for over a week. As Baron von Hertz was a notorious enemy of the Tzar, and also an exile from Court, it was presumed at the time that the secret meeting between the two was of a political nature. Later, this was ascertained to have been perfectly correct; Monsieur X and Baron von Hertz having been engaged in planning a *coup d'état* against the throne. This,

involving the removal of the Tzarina's influence from the helm of affairs, was the last thing Germany desired, and underground German influence was accordingly brought to bear upon the Baron. The plot was apparently abandoned, partly from fear of exposure and partly because of certain technical difficulties created by the war with Germany.

But now, with Russian Court intrigues almost predicting a new régime, the old plot had come to life again. About a month previously a neutral diplomat, indirectly connected with the Kiel Bureau of the German Intelligence Service, had received from Cairo an anonymous communication in code, giving certain personal facts concerning the Tzarina; and which was believed to have been sent by an exiled Russian physician, formerly employed at the Tzarskoe-Selo Palace in St. Petersburg. The mysterious letter in due course found its way into Major von Lauenstein's hands, and was pronounced by him of doubtful value and authenticity. A second missive, however, from the same source, and giving precise and intimate medical details, substantiated and amplified by correct clinical dates, which coincided with a particular event in the private life of the Russian Imperial Family, carried conviction and could not be ignored. It was decided, therefore, by the Eighth Section (Central Russia) of the Berlin High Command to watch Monsieur X, and to acquire if possible particulars of the latest move against the throne that was being engineered by him, and which was believed to turn upon those same facts communicated by the former Russian Court doctor in Egypt.

Three German agents, titled neutrals well known in Allied diplomatic circles, all sent in reports confirming Major von Lauenstein's suspicions. Not only did Monsieur X's précis contain, apparently, data in all respects similar to the facts submitted by the renegade Russian physician, but, whatever more, Monsieur X's relations with the Grand Dukes and the Socialist members of the Duma promised to enable him to strike a successful blow at last. In such case, the triumph of the anti-Tzarina faction at Court would almost certainly result in a revolution, and a popular patriotic spirit which would render for ever impossible a separate peace with Germany. In the opinion of the three German agents there was only one course open to the Berlin High Command. The fateful précis, being holograph, should be intercepted immediately, and then used as a political weapon against its author. My own mission from Major von Lauenstein, by an amusing irony of chance, was identical with my instructions from General Batioushin.

I was to secure the document from Monsieur X at all costs and regardless of the methods employed. If murder should prove to be the only way out of an impossible situation, then that would be considered an act of Intelligence with due credit to my record.

As agent " 44 " finished speaking, I knew a dark bitterness of spirit. I had just received from a member of the German Intelligence Service the inside story of an especially foul and humiliating plot against the rulers of my country ; a plot, moreover, which in its innermost ramifications, and full implications, had seemingly entirely escaped my Russian chief. While, over and above these things, there was the fact of my own equivocal position as a double spy. The thought then flashed into my mind that perhaps General Batioushin was not so uninformed after all, and that the story of agent " 44," with its wealth of precise and convincing detail, was a trap designed to test me.

A gentle tap sounded at the door, and the Polish bakery proprietor entered. Vonsovsky excused himself for disturbing us on the score that he might be of some small service to myself, whom he referred to correctly as " O.M.66." Agent " 44 " displayed some annoyance at the intrusion, but said nothing. Vonsovsky, thereupon, with an artfully ingratiating smile, produced from under his apron a common Slavonic Bible, such as could be picked up in any second-hand bookshop in the town. With, then, a mysterious and dramatic air, the Pole turned the thin leaves until he came to a strip of artificially yellowed rice-paper that had been glued on to a page of the Apocalypse.

I watched, both interested and a little puzzled, since Vonsovsky, being only a second-grade agent with fixed and limited work, should not have participated in actual counter-espionage. Very slowly the rice-paper was peeled off, revealing microscopic chemical writing, that had probably been done by a special glass pen dipped in a solution of iodine. The writing, easily blurred in case of emergency by the application of lemon juice, was arranged in the form of several concentric rings. At the centre of the rings I noticed and mentally translated the Polish abbreviations : " *Iasn. Pn. X* " (" Monsieur X "), and " *Iasn. Pna. Discrét.* " (" Madame Discrétion ") ; round the second ring were written the names of various fashionable *maisons*, or Moscow vice dens ; making the third circle was yet another Polish abbreviation : " *Sokol. Phshid.* " (" Sokolniki Suburb ") ; while round the fourth and last circle reference was made to a street fight, resulting in the death of a tall, strong man.

Agent "44," angered by the bakery proprietor's breach of spy discipline, made an impatient movement, and was on the point of intervening, when I asked him quickly in German to leave matters in my hands. Without giving him a chance to refuse, I switched round and asked Vonsovsky if by "Madame Discrétion" was meant Madame Catherine Blanchard, who, years back, had kept a *maison* in Loubianka Street, not far from the Loubianka Gallery. The Pole answered without hesitation and in the affirmative. The woman was now known as "Madame Discrétion" to her Moscow society clients, and, war-time conditions demanding an especially strict privacy in her disreputable vocation, she had found it advisable to open a new establishment in the exclusive Sokolniki Suburb. Apologising profusely for his unauthorised spy work in this connection, Vonsovsky proceeded to reveal to me his information.

Monsieur X, it appeared, had been traced to Madame Discrétion's place time and time again. It was, of course, possible that the diplomat went there for pleasure and relaxation simply; on the other hand, it provided him with an obvious screen for the putting of the final touches to his plot. Now, at that very moment, "Madame Discrétion" stood in urgent need of a "bouncer" for her new quarters, the Siberian Cossack who had been previously employed having been killed in a street brawl; and it was Vonsovsky's respectful suggestion that I should fill the vacancy. Not only would I thereby be able to keep a close eye upon Monsieur X, but a "bouncer" was always looked upon by the clients of a *maison* as a reliable man who could be entrusted with delicate missions of various kinds.

I had an inclination to burst out laughing as I listened to what had been so unexpectedly proposed. For the insignificant Polish bakery proprietor had done more to help me in my work than my astute Russian and German chiefs combined. Indeed, Vonsovsky had all unwittingly shown to me a particular possibility in my rôle of "Colonel Mousin." A cashiered Russian officer like myself—that is, one able still to show a certain shadow of good manners and better times—would be at a premium in an expensive house of pleasure. The clients of the house would be much more favourably impressed by a gentleman "bouncer" than by the ordinary and usual ruffian from some obscure slum.

Turning to agent "44," I told him that my first move in the task of intercepting Monsieur X's précis was clear to me. I intended applying, without delay, to "Madame Discrétion," as Vonsovsky had proposed.

Out in the bitter cold of the streets again, I made my way by a devious route to the massive building of Khamovnitcheski Street, that housed the Moscow Bureau of the Intelligence Service and the Personal Court Branch. Entering by the special service door, I was conducted by the agent on duty to the Report Room on the third floor. It was a sparsely furnished apartment, and was provided among other things with a file containing patriotic Red Cross postcards. Selecting one of these, I wrote an illiterate coded message to " Madame Valentina Olgina, President of the War Workers Association," who was in reality General Batioushin himself. The message was rather brief, since I did not want to create any false hopes with my chief, and merely stated that, as the result of a chance meeting with a German agent and a Polish baker, I had begun work on the précis case.

II

THE day following my visit to Vonsovsky's bakery I was engaged as " bouncer " at " Madame Discrétion's " *maison*. " Madame Discrétion " herself, when she interviewed me, resembled nothing so much as some kind of pale fish that had been forgotten in a refrigerator. Her hennaed hair showed discolorations of every hue ; her raddled and flabby cheeks were flaked with some sort of pungent powder, which had collected in little heaps in the multitude of creases, lines and pits that dotted her tired and dissipated countenance ; her enormous bell-shaped figure, of medium height and all too loosely enclosed in a pale yellow silk and lace wrapper, seemed to have been drenched in the latest French perfume, and on the fourth finger of her unsteady right hand, whose puffy fingers held a long white jade cigarette-holder, there gleamed a single-stoned emerald ring. Madame personally conducted me to my poky little room on the third floor, and wheezed asthmatically that, as " bouncer," I was to keep sober and refrain from smoking shag.

I had seen a copy of " Madame Discrétion's " police record, and it made quite interesting reading. Madame came of French peasant stock, and was born in a small fishing village near Mentone. In 1900 she came to Russia as second maid in the service of Countess Marie Parchevska, but was soon dismissed for casting fond glances at the youngest son of the house. By 1903 the pretty Frenchwoman had blossomed forth as one of the most fashionable *demi-mondaines*, and, two years later, was the mistress of an eccentric and

enormously wealthy Grand Duke. On the Grand Duke's death his lady drifted into the so-called "occult" circles of Moscow, which were headed by the notorious Brother Paul, and in 1910, after a railway accident that crippled her for life, she opened her original *maison* on Loubianka Street. Her *maison* soon became the centre of Moscow's night life, and attracted a select and variegated clientèle. Diplomats from St. Petersburg seemed, however, to be the most frequent and favoured guests, and, while there was never the slightest question of any espionage by "Madame Discrétion" herself, her establishment was on the black books of the Seventh Section of the Russian General Staff,* and only allowed to continue as a valuable source of information. It furnished, among other things, inside knowledge as to the personal vagaries of noted diplomats, and was of service in the instance of the "Man of God," Gregory Rasputin.

My position as "bouncer," night-porter and general handyman at "Madame Discrétion's" gave me a number of useful privileges, as well as making me thoroughly acquainted with all the ins and outs of the place. The Sokolniki *maison* had been built in 1870 by Antonia di Chiarmonti for Prince Demidoff. It was surrounded by a fair-sized garden, with a large monastic carp-pond and a triple row of straw-thatched dovecots, and enclosed by a high wall. Seen from the street, the house had rather a shabby appearance, with its chipped and weather-stained plaster statues over the massive front door, and the conventional watchman's box badly in need of a new coat of paint. Inside, however, a very different note was struck, and bourgeois respectability gave way to the trappings of a luxurious haunt of vice. The main hall was the last attempt to preserve an illusion of innocence and conventionality, and with its uncomfortable gilt chairs, dusty palms, aspidistra by the windows, sombre *ikon* surmounted by an oil lamp, and neat morocco-bound visitors' book, might have been transported bodily from some provincial government institution. Then, through the curtained doorway at one end, and in the small reception-room, the air became charged with the delicate scent of ambergris, and the shaded electric lights glowed suggestively upon the naked

* Iankel Gaskevitch, brother of the wife of the treacherous General Soukhomlinoff, was found dead in the Pompeian Room at "Madame Discrétion's" *maison* on November 6, 1914. Investigations proved that the young medical student was in touch with an Austrian spy named Olivios Zaperka, who wanted information on General Kaledin's Cossack Brigade operating in East Prussia. Gaskevitch's death led to the arrest of his sister, who was the first person to shed a light on the terrible disaster to Russian arms at the Mazurian Lakes in 1915, and formed the first link in the sensational Soukhomlinoff-Myassoyedov exposure in the same year.

masculine grace of a marble Priapus crushing the nymph Daphne.

Of all the rooms in that vile yet intriguing den, the dining-room and the adjoining salon were, perhaps, intrinsically the most interesting. In the dining-room, over the Florentine mantelpiece, there hung a beautifully executed picture, inspired by Boccaccio's tale of "The Princess and the Nightingale," while the furniture consisted of a table, and a few old, almost frail rosewood chairs, upholstered in faded yellow venetian silk and embroidered with erotic designs of succubi and incubi exhausting sleeping monks and nuns. On the polished parquet floor were scattered cream-coloured Kurdistan rugs, and around the walls were rows of crude, highly-tinted peasant *ikons*. The salon was a copy of a Roman gladiator *lupanarium*, even down to the musk-scented goatskins on the floor, the verbena ointment jars used by the Nubian slaves, the carved garlanded phalli of the four shallow marble foot-baths, and the silver wine-fountain facing the door. To the left of the primitive stone fireplace, ornamented with a genuinely antique slab engraved with a scene from the festival of *Lupercalia*, was the only window, fitted with brass slats and connected for ventilation purposes with the dining-room. This small and inconspicuous opening, however, was immediately above a long, wide, felt-covered shelf, fitted to the wall and spring-upholstered, and any one lying there could look into the dining-room undetected, by means of an adjustable periscopic mirror, with an intensely powerful lens, let into the base of the window. My knowledge of abnormal psychology supplied the reason for the fitting of the expensive apparatus, and told me that its primary use was not for ordinary observation purposes. On my testing the eight-inch concave lens at all possible angles and in a poor light, I found that the mirror worked perfectly—the image never blurring or trembling.

Four days after my entry into "Madame Discrétion's" *maison*, round about twelve o'clock in the morning, I was engaged in dusting the dining-room. I wielded my feather broom in a series of savage jabs, since all that I had succeeded in discovering was that certain prominent Moscow society women were organising a Black Mass, which would be held upon the premises and was no more than an unbridled neurotic orgy. The sound of a steady ring at the front door, and the drawing of heavy bolts, presently made me pause, and after a minute a postman appeared.

The postman was a hirsute individual, with a square and

massive jaw and rather shifty eyes. At sight of me the man gave a deliberate wink, whispered his Intelligence cipher, "P.62," and the war-time cipher of the Moscow Intelligence Bureau, "M.K.115," and handed me a letter addressed to "Madame Catherine Blanchard." Before I could put a question, dragging footfalls from the direction of the main hall made the postman mouth hastily that the letter was important, and should be given a simple treatment of steam; after which my informant turned and walked out.

I tossed the missive on to a salver and flourished my broom, raising a thin cloud of dust. Monsieur Riche, the many-chinned, drink-sodden French butler of the establishment, then came shuffling in, coughed, picked up the letter and put it down again without much interest, and directed a bleary eye at the tantalus standing on the mantelpiece. With a shaking hand the butler lifted out one of the heavy cut-glass bottles, and swallowed a liberal dose of '87 Prunier, before instructing me to turn out the staff at about five o'clock that afternoon. Another thirsty gulp of cognac and the bibulous Monsieur Riche shuffled away again, without a thought for "Madame Discrétion's" letter.

At the end of a minute or so I made my way through to the deserted kitchen quarters, and there carefully steamed the envelope open. Inside I found a single sheet of paper, pale blue in colour and with a foreign watermark, which bore nothing more interesting than a typewritten request, signed with the code figure "9," for the use of the dining-room that night. I closely scanned the apparently simple note, having in mind the agent-postman's parting injunctions. I noticed that under the letter "c," which frequently occurs in Russian words, there was a tiny dash, as if the writer's finger had slipped in typing and accidentally depressed that particular key. Now, the letter "c," underscored by a dash, was always used by the Seventh Section of the Russian General Staff to indicate either some political suspect plotting against the autocracy, or that a missive carried a chemical message to an undercover agent engaged upon a case. I therefore ran my finger over the first of the bluish dashes, over the inside of the envelope flap, and over the entire communication; afterwards sucking my finger-tip, to try and undermine the exact substance used for the invisible writing. I detected tannin and iron sulphate—a combination without doubt specially selected in my case, owing to the comparatively simple method required to bring out the message.

I hurriedly turned again towards two gallon Toula

samovar on the kitchen table, and held the flap of the envelope in front of the vent-hole in the lid. Then, pressing the flap over the writing on the letter, and bringing the iron sulphate into contact with the tannin, I made a series of minute dots, curves, spirals and dashes appear on the moistened gum. The writing was in the Medviedeff code, which was used by experts such as the sub-divisional chief of the Moscow Intelligence Bureau.

The sub-Divisional Chief, Colonel Rodovitch, in the present instance was brief, and, as usual, very much to the point. That same night, at about ten o'clock, I was to watch a bachelor party that would be given at " Madame Discrétion's " Sokolniki house. I was to use especial caution, since the host of the party, according to reliable information received, would be none other than the well-known and influential diplomat, Monsieur X of St. Petersburg and Moscow. The guests in all probability would be : Colonel Baron Heyder, Captain Kartzeff, Major-General Ressel, Lieutenant Neroth, Lieutenant Bedenorff, and Lieutenant Lev Dragomir. Special stress was laid on the fact that, since all these officers commanded different units of the Imperial Bodyguard, they might be implicated in the plot against the existing régime, and the party itself be only a plausible pretext for a private reading of Monsieur X's précis. In a few precise, practical words there was mentioned the abnormal relationship existing between the elderly diplomat and the exquisite Lieutenant Dragomir ; a relationship which had definite secret service as well as pathological aspects, and on which I was advised to concentrate my attention. The message ended with the assurance that " Madame Discrétion's " *maison* would be watched by the agents of the Personal Court Branch, which of itself showed the matter to be one of unusual delicacy and importance.

I was on the point of erasing the message with lemon rind, when the bell of " Madame Discrétion's " boudoir rang loudly. I knew the meaning of that summons : Madame wanted her letters and her glass of red, rather sour Caucasian wine. The bell rang again, with longer and louder peals, and to my anxious ears seemed to re-echo fantastically amid the profound afternoon silence of the house. I dreaded lest it should bring Agnes, the old French housekeeper, upon the scene, or awaken some other member of the staff from their afternoon slumbers ; and, without time to remove the chemical writing, I hastily re-sealed the letter, which I placed on a tray with Madame's glass of wine. As I climbed the stairs, I told myself that the situation called for desperate

measures. I could not possibly destroy the letter, and at all costs the secret lines showing on the envelope flap must be removed.

I knocked twice on " Madame Discrétion's " door, and, entering, found the old procuress clad in a coquettish blue silk kimono and looking like a child's porcelain birthday doll, with traces of paint on one cheek and neutral smudges on the other. The atmosphere of the room was close and rank, with a mingling of various perfumes and the stale reek of the Turkish cigarettes that Madame was continually smoking. At sight of me, my employer broke into a torrent coarse abuse and extended a fat, unsteady hand. Nerving myself for the difficult move, I stepped clumsily on to one of Madame's feet, lost my balance with a stifled cry, and stumbled sideways down on to the carpet. The tray, propelled by a deft twist of my wrist, crashed to the floor a few inches in front of me, and I saw with a pang of thankfulness the fateful envelope swimming in a pool of wine. The acid in the wine would act upon the tannin writing in the same fashion as lemon rind.

With confused sounds of dismay I got to my feet, bent down and retrieved the letter, and rubbed the sodden paper against the front of my porter's uniform until it was more or less dry, although badly creased and stained a dull purple. The shaded electric light by her chair glinted on the lenses of " Madame Discrétion's " pince-nez, as she stared silently up at me, and I had a feeling that behind her glasses there dwelt a lurking suspicion. After living the life she had, the Frenchwoman was far from being a fool, and I suffered a moment of acute misgiving. Slowly, then, as if toying with an idea, she opened the letter, read it, nodded, and finally, humming a frivolous little tune, tore the paper into fragments. After collecting the pieces of the broken wine-glass I stood awkwardly before her, wearing as crestfallen an expression as I could contrive. My manner fortunately carried conviction, and Madame with a sudden wheezy laugh waved me away, bidding me never to let my loutish person waste her precious Caucasian wine again.

That night, as the giant bells of the Church of Ivan Veliky were booming the hour of nine through the lower streets of the Sokolniki Suburb, I unlocked my battered suitcase and ran over certain articles of which I might shortly have need. There was a close-fitting suit of red silk underwear, with chamois-lined pockets ; a mask, and a bunch of skeleton keys ; a pair of cone-shaped ear-trumpets ; a jar of thin treacle, and a roll of coarse brown paper ; a rubber

truncheon, and a small automatic pistol fitted with an anti-flash device and a silencer. It was the complete equipment of a continental hotel thief; with the exception of the colouring of the underwear, which was a special feature of the Russian Intelligence Service, and was introduced by the famous Russian master spy, "D.13," who discovered that red was less visible than black when moving amid darkness.

The ear-cones I placed in one of the pockets of my porter's livery, and as I descended to my chair in the main hall of "Madame Discrétion's" *maison* the gay strains of a valse came floating up from the direction of the drawing-room.

III

The main hall, unlike most of its kind in Russia, was very warm. From where I sat, however, directly facing the entrance-door, a mysterious draught blew continually about my legs, making them feel as though they were being pricked by icy thorns. Otherwise I was comfortable enough, and in between such odd duties as happened to come my way my thoughts dwelt upon the guests invited by Monsieur X to his party.

Colonel Baron Heyder was an intimate friend of the Tzar, and the proprietor of numerous society gambling dens scattered throughout Moscow. He would be naturally *au fait* with the latest developments in the anti-Tzarina propaganda, and being essentially a man accustomed to chance his fortune on the turn of a card, would not hesitate to take part in a political plot. Captain Kartzeff was known to dabble in secret diplomacy, and during the Russo-Japanese war he had been suspected of having received a large sum of money from General Nogi, in the sinister affair of the triple explosions of the "P.B." and "K.D." batteries of Port Arthur. He was also notorious for his love affairs. Being semi-royalty of the morganatic kind, he might be expected to profit greatly by the downfall of the existing régime. Major-General Ressel, again, was a well-known firebrand and Liberal, whose shady transactions with war-time profiteers had caused the Personal Court Branch to make three important arrests. One of these arrests was that of the prominent St. Petersburg society banker, Mitya Rubenstein, who financed Gregory Tchally (the monk, Rasputin), and incidentally blackmailed him in order to gain a hold over the most prominent Court personalities.

Major-General Ressel fitted into the general scheme of the situation easily enough, but his name and rank would quite certainly prove an obstacle to his arrest. Lieutenants Neroth and Bedendorff were no more than irresponsible young men, burdened with card debts and consequently easily tempted by the prospect of ready cash.

Lieutenant Lev Dragomir, the last member of Monsieur X's party, was somewhat different and stood apart from the rest. A Russian-born Serbian, he had been a provincial police officer up to the time of his association with a certain dashing Grand Duke, who had secured for him his lieutenancy in the Imperial Bodyguard. The peculiar and abnormal intimacy between him and his royal patron, culminating in the open scandal of a joint trip to France, led to a police inquiry which was hushed up by order of the Tzar. The ultimate significance of Dragomir's present similar association with Monsieur X might be to some extent open to conjecture, nevertheless his precious record savoured of many queer things, including treason and attempted blackmail. In the hands of an unscrupulous diplomat he should make a willing plotter, and he would doubtless lend himself to anything that would secure his advancement at the Imperial Court. Furthermore, having been once a police officer, he could not be easily dealt with by a hint, and such men are specially difficult to handle in secret service work.

Monsieur X and his party arrived fairly punctually, shortly after ten o'clock. The somewhat Silenian old diplomat, monocle in eye, his neutral-coloured hair plastered down upon his head and his round puffy cheeks creased urbanely, led the way in immaculate evening dress, and was followed by the six Russian officers in undress uniform.

By that time the scene wore a lively and interesting aspect, and the evening's entertainment was getting into its stride. Coincident with the arrival of Monsieur X, " Madame Discrétion " herself appeared in the dingy hall, looking already slightly the worse for wear, and announced in her wheezy tones to the world at large that a certain operatic star was going to take part in a round of *Chasse au Lapin*—an indecent game, the prospect of which fetched an acclamatory chorus from various male voices. Past my chair figures were continually moving. Here and there were visitors from the St. Petersburg Embassies, young men for the most part ; now second and third secretaries, but some day, perhaps, ambassadors in other lands. There was also the correct, rather shy and self-conscious Englishman, drawn to the place as much from suppressed licentiousness

as simple worldly curiosity; the vivacious and perfumed Frenchman, appreciating everything as all in the natural order of things and part of his national heritage; the dignified, gravely bowing Serbian, whose instinct for indulgence was more of the primitive mountain-side and rude farmyard variety; the inquisitive, impenetrable Japanese, exploring the frailties of the West; and the slender, rapier-eyed Italian, the ever-burning salacious fires of his Roman ancestors flickering greedily just beneath the surface. The pretty ladies themselves were culled from the upper strata of the *demi-monde*, but there was also a sprinkling of eager society dowagers, on the look-out for that supreme *gigolo* thrill. Behind a bank of hot-house plants in the reception-room the "gipsy" orchestra played with vigour, on the principle apparently that the greater the noise produced the better the music.

Round about eleven the habitués of the place had scattered, to the enjoyment of their respective pursuits and pleasures, and I went off duty for a spell, to have my supper and a game of cards with the chef. On my return to my chair in the hall shortly after midnight, a weary-looking Tartar waiter, swearing vilely in his native village dialect, padded by, and from him I inquired whether Madame was taking coffee as usual in the salon. The man with a guffaw told me that on the contrary Madame was probably taking headache powders up in her room, having been carried away in a state of semi-collapse some little time previously.

After the waiter had gone, I crossed the darkened hall, keeping out of range of the light shining from the reception-room, and moving from the cover of one high-backed chair to another. The door of the salon was closed, and I strained my ears to catch the slightest sound from beyond the thick panels. In the end, deciding to risk it, and if the room should prove to be occupied to "bounce" *demi-mondaine* and *gigolo* alike, I gently turned the handle and peeped inside. The Roman-furnished salon was empty, and shaded candlelight splashed softly over the phallic wine-fountain and caught faintly the edge of a silver ash-tray. On the ash-tray was the end of a black cigar, still warm, and through the little brass-slatted window communicating with the dining-room came the murmur of voices, the clink of cavalry swords and the jingle of spurs.

As I turned and closed the door, I noticed that the key was missing, which fact had a peculiar significance. The door of the salon was fitted with an electrical device, whereby the entire house could be plunged into darkness in the event

of a raid by the police. Once the key had been withdrawn, the depression of the electric light switch in the dining-room automatically formed a broken circuit. This fact, however, was known only to a select few; either personal friends or head employees of "Madame Discrétion." And in the present instance I had a sudden ghost of a suspicion as to who it was that, in all probability, had availed himself of the trick.

Inserting the ear-cones which I carried in my uniform pocket, I climbed cautiously on to the narrow, felt-lined shelf beneath the single inter-connecting window, and there stretched myself out. I recognised two familiar voices: that of Monsieur X himself, heavy and with foreign inflections; and that of Lieutenant Dragomir, weaker and with an affected falsetto note. Both the speakers were individually distinguishable by their respective *timbres*, but such stray phrases as reached me of their conversation itself seemingly had reference to nothing more important than the recent suicide of a well-known musical comedy actress.

After a little, therefore, I had recourse to the ingenious observation mirror fitted underneath the lowermost slat of the window. I adjusted the periscopic lenses at an angle of forty.five degrees, and peered into the dining-room. At first the picture presenting itself was blurred, but upon my slightly altering the angle every detail of the scene sprang clearly and easily into vision. Monsieur X headed the oval, highly-polished table, on which were set half a dozen champagne bottles and a large box of cigars. Directly beneath the picture of "The Princess and the Nightingale" above the Florentine mantelpiece stood Lieutenant Dragomir, Colonel Baron Heyder and Major-General Ressel, while Captain Kartzeff, Lieutenant Neroh and Lieutenant Bedendorff were sprawled together on the long divan on the other side of the room. There was all at once an outburst of laughter from the two younger men, and Lieutenant Dragomir bowed ironically to his brother officers as they moved in a body towards the door.

I could not help admiring the subtle, if somewhat unsavoury, means whereby apparently a private talk between Monsieur X and the Lieutenant had been manœuvred. If a Tzarist secret agent were to enter the room at any moment he could only come to one conclusion, and hastily retire with a sly chuckle at the expense of his chief. In point of fact, however, the bulk of the watching agents outside would be drawn off into following the five retiring officers, and only myself remained to deal with the situation.

Monsieur X had taken up his position with his back towards the mantelpiece; in a very characteristic attitude, with his head a little bowed, his right shoulder lifted, his hands deep in his trouser pockets, his legs planted rigid and apart. Then, after a minute or so, he drew from the inside pocket of his dress-coat a square, buff-coloured manilla envelope, and with that moved suddenly out of the range of my vision. He came into sight again, arm in arm with Lieutenant Dragomir, to whom he was speaking in a low, rather wheedling voice, and then he gave his customary juicy bronchial chuckle. I saw the Lieutenant glance casually at his wrist-watch, stretch himself with a lazy graceful twist of his slender hips, and all at once reach out with his disengaged arm towards the electric light switch. The dining-room was plunged into darkness, and from behind me in the direction of the door there was a short sharp crackling sound, while out in the hall the alarm-bell clanged stridently. My suspicion, therefore, seemed to have been correct. It was Lieutenant Dragomir, with his police-work experience, who must have removed the electrically-controlled key of the salon.

Sliding down off the observation shelf, I snatched up one of the lighted candles and rushed out into the hall. At almost the same moment, however, the alarm ceased ringing, and I realised that the hall-boy had restored the circuit by switching on the ceiling lamps. Nevertheless, in a very short space of time I was crushed up against the emergency door at the inner end of the hall, vainly attempting to restore some semblance of order among the panic-stricken crowd of "Madame Discrétion's" clients, who believed a police raid imminent and were endeavouring to escape.

I had steered the last terrified and feebly protesting dowager to her carriage, when I saw Monsieur X talking to the hall-boy. The boy had a clear, piping voice, and I heard him declaring that he had not noticed Lieutenant Dragomir among the decamping throng. A young and pretty hostess of the establishment, wearing something apparently fastened together with orchids, thereupon assured the diplomat that she had passed the Lieutenant in the hall not ten minutes back, and Monsieur X, after stroking his chin for a moment in silence, bowed to the hostess and took his departure.

Under the pretext of wishing to tidy up the dining-room I inquired from Monsieur Riche, the French butler, whether Lieutenant Dragomir was still on the premises, and was informed with an owlish wink that that gentleman was amusing himself in the Pompeian Room on the second

floor. I could not help smiling, since if Monsieur X had executed a clever move in getting rid of his other officer guests, Lieutenant Dragomir with his use of the automatic police-alarm, had assuredly gone one better! At any rate, if what the butler said was correct, there was no immediate hurry; the Pompeian Room possessed certain special attractions which would be likely to keep the Lieutenant entertained for several hours at least.

It was three o'clock in the morning when my porter's duties were finished, and I retired upstairs to my little third-floor quarters. A clammy gust of wind from the open window swayed the flame of my guttering tallow candle as I entered, and sent the cockroach hordes scuttling for shelter behind the half-rotten fabric-covering of the damp walls. Sitting on the edge of my creaking, ramshackle bed, I smoked three cigarettes before I took off my porter's uniform and pulled out the suitcase from under my bed. I put on the close-fitting suit of red silk underwear; cut a small square from the brown paper roll, smeared it with a thin coating of treacle, and, after folding it carefully, tucked it inside one of my specially roomy, chamois-lined pockets; lightly rubbed the soles of my silk socks with powdered chalk; added my double flashlight as an afterthought; and was then ready for the precarious journey I proposed to make to the Pompeian Room, situated a short distance away on the floor below.

From the street, as I peered cautiously from my window, came the rumble of a military lorry and the measured footsteps of the night watchman. After a minute or two, I steadied myself on the broad stone sill; grasped the wrought-iron flowerpot brackets projecting at either side, and extending downwards for several feet; lowered myself until I hung full-length; and worked my hands to the very extremity of the brackets, keeping myself as closely as possible against the face of the house. I had, then, the most difficult part of all; a slight drop on to the wide ornamental ledge that ran around the house on a level with the floor beneath. I managed, however, to perform the feat safely, and, after slowly straightening my legs, paused for a space before continuing my way. One glance over my shoulder, down to where the red ribbon of lamps criss-crossed through the dark blue gloom of the Sokolniki Park, was enough, and I kept my eyes fixed firmly in front of me. Finally, in a series of quarter-turns, I started to wriggle sideways along the ledge towards the shadowy outline of the window of the Pompeian Room. On reaching my goal I was in a cold

perspiration, and as I paused again I mutually blessed the old gipsy chief of the steppes, Hospodar Dragouim, who had given me my childhood training.

The curtains were drawn within the Pompeian Room, and there was no indication of any light beyond. My next step was to break the thick glass of the window, and for that purpose I used the treacle-smeared square of brown paper I had brought with me. After striking the back of the paper a light sharp blow with my palm, and feeling the pane beneath crack and give, it was a simple matter to release the catch and climb inside.

On pushing through the heavy curtains, the room was as black as pitch, and I could not detect the sound of breathing. I pressed the button of my double flashlight, and almost at once its beam picked out the figure of Lieutenant Dragomir lying face downwards across the end of the bed. In the back of his head there was an ugly-looking wound, probably caused by some small blunt instrument, and I knew at a glance that he was dead. On examining the scene more closely, I concluded from the blood-splashes on the bed-clothes and the carpet that he had been struck while standing, and had remained swaying on his feet before he fell. At the head of the bed, on a pile of futuristically-coloured silk cushions was a young woman, also dead, yet giving more the appearance of sleep. She had a deep abdominal knife wound, but in her case the blood had been absorbed by her clothing.

My first care was for the door, which was unfastened and without its key. The key I found on the table together with an empty champagne bottle and a plate of crystallised fruit. Before locking the door, I tasted a cherry from the plate, and quickly spat it out, satisfied as to the specific drug it contained. A mixture of Spanish fly and ergotine had been used. Switching on the ceiling lamps, I next examined the dead woman's somewhat faded courtesan attire, which gave off a strong and sickly perfume of jasmine and rose, and from certain plain indications ascertained that the double death represented beyond doubt a *crime denaturé* committed by a jealous *gigolo*.

Lieutenant Dragomir's uniform lay flung across a chair in a corner of the room, and with every hope of coming upon Monsieur X's précis I started a systematic examination of the clothes. Inside the tunic were four waterproof pockets, provided with zip-fasteners. Three of the pockets were empty, but the fourth and largest contained a photograph of what appeared to be a drawing-room in an ordinary,

old-fashioned house, such as would be found in the east suburbs of Moscow. After glancing at the photograph, and failing to see in it anything of special interest, I retained it purely as a matter of routine. In the pockets of the dead man's well-cut cavalry breeches I found a considerable sum of money, and a military pass for a journey to the garrison town of Abo (Turku), Finland. On an impulse I ripped open the double felt-epaulettes of the tunic and, after stretching the secret rubber lining intended for the carrying of important field despatches, I discovered a folded piece of blank paper, of foreign make, of the kind specially for written messages and most probably representing Lieutenant Dragomir's mission to Finland. It was clear, however, at the end of my search that the wily Monsieur X had not parted after all with his valuable précis.

I was standing by the curtained window when the door flew open with a crash, and ten uniformed agents of the Personal Court Branch entered. Behind them appeared "Madame Discrétion" herself, a comically bizarre figure in her *déshabillé* and mingled fear and indignation. I exchanged a quick nod with the senior agent of the party, "C. 20," and indicated the bodies on the bed. Then, cutting short "Madame Discrétion's" exclamations of surprise on recognising myself, I gripped her arm and led her over to the dead young woman, where I forced her to kneel. Speaking with brutal directness, I gave the old harridan in the fullest fashion the more than unpleasant facts of her own position, and when I had finished knew that I had effectually secured the silence of herself and her staff. One of the agents thereupon led Madame away, and just before she went I saw her eyes fixed intently upon my burglar's suit of red silk, which had suffered somewhat in my outside climb from the floor above.

"C.20" expressed his apologies for the unexpected raid, assuring me that he had had no intention of edging into my work. He had, he explained, simply been compelled to act by the persistent whistling of the night watchman, an unofficial police agent, who had happened to notice the broken window. With "C.20" I was already quite well acquainted and, with a friendly smile, I requested him to put through a call to the Ministry of War, and to inquire if Lieutenant Lev Dragomir had been ordered to deliver a chemically treated message to the military authorities at Abo.

The reply from the War Ministry was not altogether what I expected. Lieutenant Dragomir had been merely

detailed to report for military service at the garrison town of Abo, and had no message whatever to deliver, as all vital messages or despatches were sent by the courier corps. My hand closed on the folded piece of paper I had found concealed in the dead officer's epaulette, and I restrained an exclamation. It was not selfishness that made me say nothing further to "C.20" in the matter, but the instinctive knowledge that confidences of any sort are fatal in the rôle of a double spy.

Before I left "Madame Discrétion's" *maison* in the early morning of November 7, I asked one of the Personal Court Branch agents to communicate with the Divisional Chief of the Moscow City Police, Major-General Voronin, and to secure a written permission to have Lieutenant Dragomir and the woman removed to the secret chamber of the Nikolai-Izmailovski morgue, reserved for the bodies of those involved in political cases.

IV

My first step on quitting "Madame Discrétion's" house was a visit by a roundabout route to a Greek tobacconist in an unnamed street near the Ochotin Ryad Market. The Armenian proprietor of the shop was a reliable German agent, and after short-changing me as usual he promised to inform Headquarters that agent "O.M.66" reported progress in his work.

In Soucharevski Square I next picked up a closed carriage and drove to the Moscow Intelligence Bureau off Khamovnitcheski Street, where I enjoyed a plain but good breakfast and some very tolerable cigarettes. On my putting through a telephone call to "D.13," Assistant Chief of the Personal Court Branch, I obtained, to the accompaniment of a number of cynical remarks, a promise that Lieutenant Dragomir's death would be treated as a "shut case," or on the level of a State secret. This included an assurance that the War Minister, General Polivanoff, would issue an official statement to the effect that the young officer had left for Abo, in Finland, where he would remain until further orders.

I telephoned, after that, to General Batioushin at the Headquarters of the Russian General Staff in St. Petersburg. By my Russian chief I was instructed to leave at once for the Orusheina a Palata Armoury, situated in a wing of the Kremlin Palace. There the famous photographic and chemical expert of the Personal Court Branch, Captain

Patrick Aloisus O'Brien de Lassy, would give me any assistance I required. In this last respect, as I started out for the Kremlin, I could not help thinking that General Batioushin had over-estimated the importance of my two finds in Lieutenant Dragomir's possession, since the Russian-born Irishman, Captain O'Brien de Lassy, only worked on subjects of special or unique interest, and then often needed a great deal of pressure from the War Minister himself.

The "Traitors' Room," which had been assigned to me by order of General Batioushin, was situated in the left wing of the Great Kremlin Palace, and with the passing of centuries had lost nothing of its eerie glamour or dark fame. It had narrow, iron-grilled windows of early Slavic type, which contributed to the gloomy medieval atmosphere of the scene; down the centre of the stone-flagged floor ran a long oaken table of great age, with solid ivory legs; and round the bare grey walls were hung the swords of bygone condemned Muscovite, Cossack and Polish traitors, with hammer-blunted blades. The room made a somewhat theatrical setting for matter-of-fact Intelligence work, yet one invaluable quality it certainly possessed—namely, complete and utter silence.

Some hours later, by the light of a lamp, at the long oaken table, I sat intently studying the cabinet-size photograph I had taken from Lieutenant Dragomir's tunic pocket. Around me was scattered a miscellany of objects, with which I had been supplied: books on architecture, rulers, callipers, pencils, and various scientific instruments of a specialised type used for certain phases of Intelligence work. By Captain O'Brien de Lassy the mysterious photograph had been treated with chemical baths, and the application of a solution of ferro-cyanide had given an added clarity and hardness to the glazed surface. Nevertheless, the ordinary, old-fashioned suburban drawing-room in the picture remained unaltered, and the only real clue to a hidden meaning lay in a series of very fine red-ink lines that could be best seen under a strong magnifying glass. These I had not noticed in my first hurried inspection in the dim light of the Pompeian Room at "Madame Discrétion's" *maison*, and had only discovered when examining the photograph more closely by daylight at the Intelligence Bureau.

The arrangement of the red-ink markings was wholly puzzling. A line ran across the inlaid floor of the drawing-room, with its central pattern of wings, flowers, and Cupid bows. The three walls, again, had curved and arrowed

lines drawn upon them, which terminated between portraits and ornate wine-cupboards and then zigzagged in a more pronounced form towards the two doors. Lines, indeed, interspersed with dots, scored every inch of the photograph, and finally centred in a dark red circle on the tapestry *portiére* over the second door. As far as I could judge, the encircled portion of the tapestry design represented the *auto-da-fé* of a priest, but beyond that, even with the aid of the strongest lens, I was unable to go.

I had recourse, then, to the camera-shaped electric lamp, invented by Engineer-Captain Peter Anatra, and which had been specially designed to deal with blurred or imperfect secret service snapshots. Placing the photograph on the lowest of the adjustable stands, I slid it to about ten inches from the powerful projector, containing two large bulbs, and switched on the light. In the intense white glare details sprang into startling prominence, and the obscure priest perishing amid a martyr's flames was revealed as one, Father Prokopy, the leader of the " Old Believers," a sect opposed to the teachings of the Russian Orthodox Church.

I switched off the Anatra lamp, and sat bolt upright, thinking. Two centuries back the " Old Believers " had been forbidden by the Holy Synod to hold their religious ceremonies in consecrated churches and chapels, and had been driven into using ordinary houses or barns. Father Prokopy who was a very clever artist, met the difficulties of the situation in a distinctly original fashion, and, whenever a service was to be held, distributed among his followers hand-painted pictures of some ordinary household room. During the cermony the congregation were required to keep their eyes fixed on the picture in their hands, and, by substituting in their minds the different sacred articles prominent in an orthodox place of worship for the specially arranged features of the room in the picture, to imagine themselves actually in a church. This device obviated any danger in the event of the service being surprised by a police raid. Father Prokopy ultimately perished at the stake, and here, years afterwards, I had an intuition that his ruse, in a novel form, was being employed again.

I then perceived, working upon a definite supposition, that the photograph in my hand was a composite affair. That is to say, the arrangement of the drawing-room was such that the placing of its various features fitted in with the disposition of the interior of a church. Thus : the floor design of wings, flowers, and Cupid bows could represent the central altar ; the portraits and wine-cupboards on the

walls, *ikons* and *vifezda* candle-holders; the two doors, the sacrament gates. Finally, the representation on the *portière* of the apodiabolosis of Father Prokopy, quite apart from its encirclement with red ink, was a leading clue in itself, since that particular religious feature was strictly forbidden in the chapels of the Empire. The next, and far more difficult, point to determine, was which precise church in all Russia was indicated. There were hundreds of churches in Moscow and St. Petersburg alone, and even the smaller provincial towns had an average of four. It was while I was counting the red-ink lines in the hope of discovering some kind of numerical code, that I noticed that the upper edge of the photograph was tinted blue. The shade was a light indigo, such as might have resulted from ferro-cyanide reacting on starch, and might be no more than an accidental result of Captain O'Brien de Lassy's experiments. However, we all have a weakness for jumping to conclusions and reasoning backwards from a given point, and my thoughts suddenly quickened. The colour of the Virgin's robes, when painted by Russian artists, was invariably blue; and blue was also the primary colour of Russia's most historic churches. While then, advancing yet another step, I searched my mind for some church where blue would have a special meaning in the eyes of the Holy Synod and the Imperial Court.

There came to me the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan in St. Petersburg, and all at once my heart leapt. In the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan blue was the predominant colour of the magnificent Byzantine draperies around the six foot, gem-encrusted Stroganoff *ikons* that had been transferred from Moscow in 1710, while dark blue ribbons, shimmering with aquamarines, also bound together the banners and eagles captured in 1812 from Napoleon the Great. The Cathedral had once been the favourite church of Prince Kutuzov-Smolenski and Prince Barclay de Tolley, two famous generals in the time of Alexander I, and had since become the traditional place of worship for the Imperial Family and the *élite* of St. Petersburg society. A sense of being somehow upon the right track was with me, but the network of red lines completely baffled me.

At that point Captain O'Brien de Lassy entered the "Traitors' Room," and came towards me with his habitual quick nervous strides. The eminent photographic expert was a very tall man, with a strikingly emaciated face the colour of old ivory, high cheek-bones, deeply sunken eyes veiled by long lashes, and a limp ragged beard reminiscent

of a Renaissance Christ. Across his forehead was a livid weal, caused by the pressure of the elastic band of his laboratory mask. Dirty, unkempt in his appearance and his habits, Captain O'Brien de Lassy in his own particular branch of the Intelligence Service was nevertheless a figure of considerable weight and power.

The Captain held in his acid-stained hand my second discovery of the previous night—the blank piece of paper from the secret recess in one of Lieutenant Dragomir's epaulettes, and with the slightly condescending air of the expert he explained to me the technical details of his experiments in search of concealed writing. The chemical writing employed did not come under the Wurtz-Vishnevskï formula, which was always the first regulation test to be applied, and it had been necessary to have resort to orthochromatic plates. The negative was then developed, reduced and intensified with mercury perchloride and, when dry, was placed in a steel frame and a second plate exposed by contract. The process was repeated nine times, until the writing stood out clearly.

I picked up the piece of paper which Captain O'Brien de Lassy tossed down on to the table, and examined it under my reading lamp. The message described shortly and in rather formal language a drive to the Kresstovskz Islands, and a boat excursion on the Neva. Since codes which are based upon certain misspelt words seldom vary, in the present instance I assumed that the correct letter should be written over the incorrect one, or else given a numerical value corresponding with the incorrect letter's position in the Russian alphabet ; and with very little difficulty I translated the message, which ran as follows :

> " Date has been decided. November 15, 1915. Photograph represents Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan. Red lines are sentinel posts. Heyder will stand in centre of the inlaid floor. Kartzeff will occupy place under picture. Others according to circumstances. Meet in three days, November 14, at Gromoff's house. Message ends. 9."

Glancing up, I saw with distaste the bizzarre Captain de Lassy help himself to a fresh quid of rank tobacco, and then the expert had launched into another long technical disquisition. The paper was made out of esparto grass, and, there being always a possibility of a chemically ingrained drawing coming to light, a process of aniline sulphate and

sulphur fumes had been also employed. As a result a perfect "shadow picture" was obtained on the back of the message, which showed in a faint pink discoloration that I had already noticed but put down to some ordinary chemical reaction. The Captain then produced from one of the capacious pockets of his overall a small instrument fitted with a magnifying lens and a series of grooved stands, placed the treated piece of paper upon a glass slide, and showed me a drawing of the interior of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan. The drawing was accurate down to the smallest detail, and the position of all the sacred objects corresponded exactly with the various household objects in Lieutenant Dragomir's photograph. My earlier theory had been perfectly correct.

Some twenty minutes later I had spread out upon the table special blue prints of the Cathedral, which I had obtained from the custodian of the Kremlin Museum, and was pointing out to Captain de Lassy the numerous sentinel posts occupied on State occasions by officers of the Imperial Bodyguard. I showed the exact position which, according to the decoded message, Colonel Baron Heyder and Captain Kartzeff would occupy on the unknown occasion fixed for November 15, and suggested that possibly it was the intention of Monsieur X, with the co-operation of the Imperial Bodyguard, to detain the Tzar, the Tzarina, and the whole congregation present, for a reading of the précis that was to be a last desperate attempt to precipitate a *coup d'état.**

Nevertheless, I had of necessity farther to go before I had a really water-tight case to put before General Batioushin. Outside fiction, your chief of Intelligence does not act upon an agent's theory merely, however reliable the agent or plausible his reasoning; but, rather, being a man saddled with a great responsibllity, and also to some extent trammelled with red tape, he requires essentially well-balanced data, if not of an official, at any rate of a semi-official, kind.

I put through a call to the Special Agents' Room at the Abo Intelligence Bureau in Finland, and had a long conversation with senior agent "N.B.77." I learned that the late Lieutenant Dragomir's former Grand Ducal patron

* In the early fifteenth century Prince Ivan Kalitá, who was in some sense a founder of the Russian Empire, detained Princess Anna of Muscovy in a small chapel at Kieff, the capital of his domains and incidentally the first capital of Russia. Prince Kalitá, to further his dynastic ambitions, desired the Princess to marry him, and attempted to force her into compliance with his wish by reading, before the assembled noblemen of her retinue, a scandalous but false story of her love for a Court jester.

was staying at the château of an intimate friend near the Aura Bridges, which was especially interesting since the château's owner was no less a personage than Otto Henius Wikistrom-Bockholmen, who in 1905 attacked the Tzarina through a certain diplomatic channel technically known in Intelligence circles as "foreign." The Grand Duke, moreover, was said to be expecting important documents, and had cancelled his appearance at a municipal dinner on November 15, as he was leaving for St. Petersburg on that day.

My next call was to the Chancellary of the Imperial Household in St. Petersburg, and to ensure getting the connection speedily I gave my secret cipher, "U.14." After some little delay, while the military operator did his best with the rules and regulations of the General Staff, I was put through to a high official of the Court. I learned than that on the so important date, November 15, the Imperial Family and most of the Grand Dukes would attend a solemn *Te Deum* at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan. At the service it was quite possible that the Socialist members of the Duma would be present, together with certain of the diplomatic corps; while, it being in every sense a full-dress State occasion, all the sentinel posts, inside and out, would be distributed among the officers of the *Svodny Polk*. Indeed, no other regiments were to be on duty, with the exception of a mounted patrol of the Leib Ataman Cossacks.

I had barely replaced the receiver, when the telephone rang again, and an urgent call from the Seventh Section of the General Staff came through. It was General Batioushin himself speaking, and on receipt of my news I could plainly detect the agitation in his voice. He was sending his own Mercédes, he told me, and in it I was to leave for St. Petersbutg immediately. At the Moscow Intelligence Bureau, moreover, I was to be fitted out with a staff officer's uniform.

V

LATE in the afternoon of November 14, at Moscow, the traffic running south from Pretchhistenka Gate to Ostojenka Street seemed to be mostly composed of old and rusty *droshkys* (low, four.wheeled open carriages), driven by big bearded *izvozschiks*, and foul-smelling sanitary carts in charge of nondescript individuals in creosote-smeared overalls. It was, however, very orderly traffic, and for the reason that most of the drivers were picked agents of the Personal Court Branch.

Disguised as an *izvozschik* also, my face red and begrimed above a bristling stubble of beard, I walked past the Nicholas Station and paused to look at my *Alma Mater*, the Imperial Lyceum. With the inevitable stirring of so many happy memories and the sense of the vast gulf that stretched between my life in those earlier days and my life at the present time, a lump rose in my throat. There were occasions when the necessary "disgrace" I had undergone in the summer of the previous year, and which had cut me off entirely from my family, my friends, and everything to which by birth I had been accustomed, came home to me with a bitter agony of spirit that was hard to bear. And now, standing before the old Lyceum, with my nerves raw after a week of continuous and unremitting work, I suffered one of my bad periods. But then, the acrid odour of my cabman's clothes rising in my nostrils, I felt the coarse growth upon my chin and with a little shake of the shoulders passed on my way.

Many things had occurred since my dash to St. Petersburg in answer to General Batioushin's urgent summons; a furious journey that had ended only when the chief's car deposited me at the door of the Headquarters of the General Staff opposite the Winter Palace in the Dvortzóvaya Square. There was my secret audience with the Tzar, during which it was decided that on November 15, the Imperial Family would not be present at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan; my personal report to the War Minister, General Schouvaloff (General Polivanoff's successor, who had not yet been officially installed), and the subsequent transference of some of the officers of the Imperial Bodyguard to garrison towns in Finland; my informal talk with a member of the French Military Mission, to whom I outlined the dangerous possibilities of the present political situation; my telephone conversation with the Supreme Commander of the Caucasian Army, the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevitch, who assured General Batioushin that loyal troops could be sent to St. Petersburg at a moment's notice. While lastly, and upon the other side, there had been my interview with a certain neutral minister, who provided Germany with her chief underground diplomatic channel, and who gripped my hand until it was blue when I told him that, in the event of my intercepting the précis of Monsieur X, I would hand it to the Moscow Bureau of the German Intelligence Service.

I made my way by a roundabout route to the scene of the evening's business. As I passed through the old Kitay Gorod, the crowded, irregularly built, Chinese inhabited

part of the town, the grey-coated ghost of Napoleon I seemed to rise at every step. From the mighty Red Staircase of the old Kremlin the Emperor had watched the rapid progress of the devastating fire during the tragic night of September 16, 1812, and there spoke to his generals, Murat, Eugene, Berthier and Ney, in the midst of leaping flames and flying cinders. Then, north of the Kremlin, and between the Church of St. Basil, with its gilt onion-shaped domes, and the Iberian Gate, lay the Red Square, like a great ruby, and beyond it a vast conglomerated background of magnificent palaces, watch-towers, churches, chapels, monasteries, convents, hospitals, barracks, arsenals, and bastions—a strange blend of slow civilisation and tenacious barbarism which went to make up Mother Moscow and Holy Russia. Finally, nearing the Imperial Lyceum again, I entered a quarter mostly consisting of warehouses, junk-shops, cheap restaurants and an occasional disused and broken-down palace.

Ostojenka Street, which was my destination, was composed of small commercial men's residences, and its houses were somewhat grim and dark with heavy granite façades. About half-way up stood the chapel of the White Dove of Pity, a little building of fretted marble that pressed against the pseudo-Gothic walls of Peter Gromoff's abode, the meeting-place given in the secret message Captain O'Brien de Lassy had brought to light. Peter Gromoff, a wealthy merchant in the salt fish trade, was an old political offender, and had survived the revolution of 1905 by entertaining Grand Dukes who openly said that their host's champagne tasted of herrings. Gromoff's house, as I glanced quickly at it in passing, wore an utterly dead and dark appearance.

I entered the chapel of the White Dove of Pity which was fortunately empty, and was examining a fresco of St. Valentina among the Lilies, when a very tall monk came in and genuflected before the alter. The "monk" was agent "B.22," of my own branch of the Russian Intelligence Service, and if his sombre robe was a trifle loose it was because it hid two police automatics and various other objects used in a swift official raid. After a word with "B.22," I looked at my wrist-watch and then out of the chapel doorway up and down the street. When I arrived Ostojenka Street had been more or less deserted, but now it was filled with agents of the Personal Court Branch, in the guise of hawkers, labourers, soldiers, beggars, and hospital service monks.

Stepping out into the roadway, I gave three blasts on my whistle, blowing each time a little more loudly; and immediately the crowd came together, formed itself into

regular order and, under the leadership of one of the hospital service monks, hurled itself against Peter Gromoff's door. There was a confused sound of hammers smashing against wood, a grating of iron bolts wrenched from their fastenings, and then a dull crash as the door gave way. With "B.22" I had joined the rest, and was carried with the general rush into the house. Inside, members of the raiding party went swiftly and methodically to work: herding together the terrified servants; extinguishing and smashing oil-lamps; tearing down lace curtains and stuffing them into speaking-tubes; disconnecting any telephones; chasing away and locking up furiously barking wolf-hounds. "B.22" and myself, with several others, meanwhile climbed the stairs and were met by a massive oak door, leading apparently into a drawing-room. I was on the point of pulling out my skeleton keys, when a revolver exploded deafeningly in front of me and the door flew open as if from a kick.

Pushing my way forward, I confronted a white-faced Peter Gromoff, and informed him that this was a political raid of a very special kind. Gromoff, who was a burly figure of a man, with a von Tirpitz beard, made no attempt at protestation, however; which was perhaps only to be expected, seeing that he was looking into the muzzle of my service .38. I then swung him into a chair, and waved in front of his staring eyes my official badge.

Through another door of the drawing-room the practical and efficient "B.22" ushered in the conspirators who had forgathered at Gromoff's house. They were all present: Monsieur X himself, Major-General Ressel, Colonel Baron Heyder, Captain Kartzeff, Lieutenant Neroth and Lieutenant Bedendorff; and, as I turned, I heard "B.22" inquiring of them, with sarcastic enjoyment, whether they knew the difference between the Riviera and Siberia.

Monsieur X maintained his position as leader, and, throwing out his chest very much like a pouter pigeon, endeavoured to put up some kind of bluff. Although outwardly controlled enough, I could see that in reality he was desperately embarrassed, if not upon the verge of panic. In his precise, pedantic tones, and with a show of rather hollow indignation, he demanded of me the reason of the raid, declaring that General Batioushin was not omnipotent and liable for this outrage to a severe reprimmand. With my eyes fixed steadily upon him, I waited a full minute before replying, and then said, slowly and through half-shut lips, that not only was Lieutenant Lev Dragomir dead, but the Tzar and Tzarina would not be attending divine

service at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan on the morrow. I added that the reason for the alteration in the Imperial was certain imformation received by the Intelligence Service and which would be divulged later.

The effect of my words was noticeable not only in the case of Monsieur X, but with the rest. I had spoken purposely in the manner of an undercover agent who wishes to disguise his voice, and that, together with the shock of what I said and my *izvozschik* disguise, plainly struck at the roots of the conspirators' confidence. Monsieur X's round fleshy face paled slightly, his light-coloured watery eyes flickered away from mine, and the fingers of one of his plump white hands played with the broad black silk ribbon of his monocle. Then, at a sign from me, " B.22 " ushered them all into an adjoining room, where they were required to wait, and at my request I was left alone.

In actual fact, however, my own feelings were distinctly mixed. On top of the natural elation at the successful carrying out of the raid I had a lurking uneasiness lest in the end I should be proved to have overstepped the mark. The vital précis had yet to be found. Technically, as a fully accredited representative of a foreign country, Monsieur X could not be searched except in the presence of a member of his own diplomatic corps, but this difficulty could be got over if he himself voluntarily permitted it. In the present instance, therefore, such a course could only be adopted, if adopted at all, as absolutely a last resort, and I could only hope that the précis might be concealed somewhere in the room in which I stood.

The drawing-room of Peter Gromoff was clearly the original of Lieutenant Dragomir's combination photograph. The only new feature was a grey tarpaulin, on which in bold strokes of yellow paint was drawn a plan of the interior of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan. There were distinctly marked the apse, the *ikonostass*, the central altar, the sacrament gates, the balcony leading to the bell-tower, and, above all, the secret steel-lined door reserved for the Emperor and Empress. On the plan every foot of available floor-space had been divided into squares, alphabetically marked, and numbered according to the rank of their occupants, who were indicated by an abbreviated name. For example: the Roman figure I stood for a Grand Duke, or a Gentleman of the Chamber; II for a Master of Ceremonies, or an Imperial Equerry; III for a nobleman with the title of a Prince, or a Lady-in-Waiting; while other figures, up to XV, indicated staff generals, admirals, diplomats, courtiers, society women, members of the Duma, and prominent

merchants of the first and second guilds. The tarpaulin, in fact, as I immediately recognised, was an enormous copy of the especially secret chart issued on State occasions by the Chancellary of the Holy Synod to the Controller of the Imperial Household, Count Fredericks, to prevent any confusion in the disposal of the congregation. And, from the abbreviated names in the painted squares, showing the position to be taken up be different distinguished personages, I could see that the Controller had deliberately included all those who were notoriously unfriendly to the Empress.

Comparing, then, my own Kremlin Museum blue prints of the Cathedral, which I happened to have brought with the plan upon the tarpaulin I perceived yet another significant feature. A dozen officers of the Imperial Bobyguard, placed at various strategic points, would be easily able to detain the entire congregation for a considerable length of time. As I knew, the Tzar, who was a deeply superstitious man, had expressed a particular wish that agents of the Political Police and the Intelligence Service should not be introduced into sacred places, since his Imperial Majesty was held to be protected by God. Even, however, if General Batioushin had placed his agents in the ordinary way inside the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan, they would quite certainly be unable to prevent Monsieur X from reading his précis, and could be without difficulty overpowered by the conspirators.*

I conducted as thorough an examination as possible of the rest of the room, but altogether without result. I was standing, then, chewing gloomily at an unlighted cigarette, when my eye fell quite by chance upon the row of ancient Byzantine *ikons* hanging against the farther wall. They were rare examples of the pre-Stroganoff school, and represented Our Most Beatific Lady of Iberia, Our Lady of Achtzr, Our Lady of the Blessed Milk, and Our Lady of Affon. Each *ikon* was a masterpiece of multi-coloured lacquer, and at first my only feeling was of admiration for the work. But then, of a sudden, my attention sharpened, and I crossed over to obtain a nearer view. There was something in the position of the *ikons*

* The Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan was erected in 1801-1811, from the designs of Voronikin, who also introduced fifty columns, monoliths of Finnish granite, behind which there were slightly raised posts for members of the Political Police and the Imperial Bodyguard. As the total area of the building was 236 square feet, the posts were so arranged as to command every door and, if necessary, to give every facility for the direction of a rapid cross-fire. It is not generally known that on March 10, 1911, the Personal Court Branch staged a mock attack on the "Imperial Family," and on that occasion, from the special posts of vantage behind the columns, 7 "revolutionaries" held up the entire "police force" and the "congregation" for something like a quarter of an hour.

My attention sharpened and I crossed over to obtain a nearer view. There was something in the position of the Ikons that was quite wrong from the traditional Russian point of view.

that was quite wrong from the traditional Russian point of view.

What happened, after that, was as swift and unexpected as it was miraculous. I perceived that the *ikon* of Our Most Beatific Lady of Iberia, which by rights should have been last in the row, was hanging first—proceeding, that is, from left to right. This led me to open the silver *riza* (a decorated cover extending over the picture, with the exception of the face and hands) of the misplaced *ikon*, and there, resting against the wooden panel of the picture, was a square, buff-coloured manilla envelope, sealed, with three blue ink stars denoting a diplomatic document. For a minute I could scarcely believe my eyes. Plainly, in the matter of transposing the *ikons*, somebody had been a little too clever!

I went out into the adjoining room where the six conspirators were waiting, and requested Monsieur X to remain half an hour longer. I then repaired to the privacy of Peter Gromoff's library on the same floor, and carefully opening the precious envelope, read through the twenty-three holograph pages I found inside. It was Monsieur X's famous précis sure enough, and I checked it through in case any of it should be in code. It was all straightforward enough, however, and its contents very much what I had been led to expect.

The précis consisted of a wickedly clever rehash of an old Court scandal affecting the Tzarina. The allegation was that the Commander of Her Imperial Majesty's Uhlans, General Orloff, had fallen in love with the First Lady of the Empire, and that his affection had been reciprocated. Great stress was laid on the little-known fact that a month before the birth of the young Grand Duke Alexis Nicholaevitch, General Orloff died in Cairo, whither he had repaired ostensibly on account of his health, under circumstances so masked by the St. Petersburg Political Police that the cause of death was never established. There followed the medical data that by a devious route had reached Major von Lauenstein, and which had been supplied by the exiled Court physician in Egypt. The medical particulars also dealt with the health of the Tzarevitch, who was never a strong child, and suffered from a certain serious physical defect attributed to tubercle of the pelvis-femoral joint of the left leg. This latter fact was given a political significance by its probable effect upon the possibility of a direct succession.*

*It was understood in the inner Court circles that should the unfortunate Grand Duke Alexis Nicholaevitch succumb to his complaint (hæmophilia), the Grand Duke Dimitri Pavlovitch was to marry the Grand Duchess Olga, the daughter of their Majesties, thus becoming heir apparent to the Romanoff Throne. This, evidently, was well known to Monsieur X, who championed the Grand Duke Cyril's cause.

Upon finishing my perusal of the document, I re-sealed the envelope and tucked it away in an inner pocket. After a conversation by telephone with the Imperial High Headquarters at Pskov, I instructed one of the Personal Court Branch agents to bring Monsieur X and his friends to the drawing-room again. When everybody was seated, I addressed myself first to Major-General Ressel and informed him that the Tzar would consider his resignation, and that of his subordinates, as due to ill-health. I next turned to Monsieur X, showed him the envelope containing his précis, and said that it would be forwarded to the Seventh Section of the General Staff without the formality of a ministerial report. Monsieur X, who had entered with something of his former superior air, hurriedly pulled a handkerchief from his breast-pocket and wiped the perspiration from his face. Finally, when he hastily took his departure, in his agitation he kept twisting the door-handle in the wrong direction and had to be assisted by myself.

I also left almost immediately, having still to perform a very necessary piece of work. Slipping up a back-street, I gave a low whistle and a sanitary cart came rumbling towards me. As he passed the agent-driver flung me a stained city-worker's overall, which, after I had put it on, completely covered my *izvozschik* clothes. Twenty minutes of brisk walking brought me to a small candle factory in the neighbourhoos of the Zatchatievsky Convent. The factory was the Moscow Bureau of the German Intelligence Service, a place for which Russian counter-spies had long been seeking.

There were four men in the boiler-room: Michos Papayani, Olivios Zaperka, Karl von Dreisler, and Knut Bjort. As Papayani was the owner of the factory, I handed Monsieur X's précis to him. In return I received a small bronze disc, issued by the Berlin High Command and always given as an acknowledgment of the delivery of political documents, military papers, copies of engineering specifications, and the like. Before I left I warned the men that, in spite of my disguise and precautions, I might have been shadowed by a Russian counter-spy. Papayani, however, only laughed and declared that I was far too nervous for my work. On my pretending to resent his taunt, and threatening to report him to Major von Lauenstein, my only answer was a further burst of laughter and a lusty kick.

Back in Ostojenka Street, I entered an all-night tea-shop and spent the best part of an hour telephoning. I spoke first with General Batioushin, and then with his secretary, Captain Niloff. Afterwards, as I was finishing a welcome

bowl of piping-hot Ukrainian *borsch*, a priest strolled into the shop and approached my table, whining for alms. He was a muscular-looking individual, with a raven-black beard liberally anointed with linseed oil, a thick nose with tufts of snuff-bleached hair sprouting from each nostril, and a polite habit of belching when asking for food. I gave him a paper rouble, and, sitting down, he started chatting in a most friendly fashion.

It was quite possible, the priest after a few minutes suddenly observed to me, that since all things came from God there had by that time been a police raid on a certain candle factory not far away; and, moreover, by the will of the thrice-blessed, almonded-eyed saints, that Monsieur X's précis was at that very moment reposing inside the lining of his clerical habit. My companion, in fact, was none other than my old master, "D.13," Assistant Chief of the Personal Court Branch, and I solemnly gave him another rouble note on hearing that one of the four spies of the raided German Moscow Intelligence Bureau had been allowed to escape, in order to clear me in Major von Lauenstein's eyes.

At dawn, some hours later, when the towers of the Inner Kremlin seemed to rise out of a scarlet haze, I stood in a line of unemployed in the Arbat Square. Presently the municipal employment agent called out my name, Tereshka Semipouzoff, and I argued in the *katzap* dialect as to what constituted a minimum living wage. It was an entirely genuine attempt on my part to obtain work, since a double spy, working in his own country, must continue to play up to his disguise for some little time after a big coup.

ENGLISH SPY

By

BERNARD NEWMAN

When war broke out the author joined the Royal Engineers as a dispatch-rider and later received his commission in an infantry regiment. After a short time he was attached to the Intelligence Department and found his intimate knowledge of German and French invaluable, as this story shows. The Mason mentioned in the narrative was an old Cambridge friend who had joined up at the same time as the author.

IT was not until March, 1915, that I had a chance to put into operation any of those schemes which Colonel Hylton had discussed with me in our first talk. But immediately I saw the signs of battle on the horizon I prepared for a new stunt. My chance came with what is called the Battle of Neuve Chapelle. On March 10, after a sudden and terrific bombardment, our infantry advanced to the attack. The first stages of the battle, as often, were very successful, but later, due very largely to bad Staff work, the attack broke down. It had been a success in a way in demonstrating the power and effect of a surprise heavy bombardment, but, unfortunately, the high command only read a part of the lesson that was offered to them. They appreciated the effect of the bombardment without appreciating the effect of the surprise. Consequently, when planning subsequent offensives they adopted long and heavy bombardments which were no surprise at all, and so achieved practically no result whatsoever.

However, we did take nearly two thousand prisoners at Neuve Chapelle, which gave me my chance; and as the prisoners were herded into the great barbed wire cage which had been prepared to receive them I was flung in amongst them, for I was dressed in a German uniform and, what is more, my shoulder strap proclaimed that I belonged to a regiment only slightly distant from the scene of the battle—just to the north of Fromelles, to be exact. Thus no question would be asked, as it would be assumed that I had been captured in the northern sector of the battle, for it was quite certain that these prisoners, captured early in the day, would have no idea as to the length of the battle front.

My stratagem was very successful. At first all of us were silent in the indignity of defeat. We were called up one by one before Intelligence Officers belonging to the different divisions involved. To my amusement, when it came to my turn the task of interrogating me fell to Mason! How we kept a straight face I don't know, but I class it as one of the best pieces of acting on both our parts that we ever accomplished.

After examination, the prisoners were herded back into the pen and given something to eat. After that our spirits began to return, for a well-fed man soon forgets the horror and indignity behind him. We began to talk, comparing notes of our experiences in the battle. It was then that I began my real operations. I had joined a little group of the more intelligent looking men. Gradually I got them to talk. They had no suspicion of me whatsoever, of course, and talked quite freely, and, as they thought, confidentially, of military things. I don't want to infer that they told me all the secrets of the German General Staff. That only happens in fantastic books of fiction. Naturally they knew nothing of German Staff ideas, but they did know what units were in the vicinity, they did know of back-area work that was being done and, what was more important, one of them gave a hint—for he could do no more, having heard nothing further than a hint himself—that very soon the Germans had a new weapon which they were going to exploit on the Western Front. He said that poison gas was being manufactured in German factories, and was to be flung in shells far behind the Allied lines, there to do terrible execution. (I should say that I passed on this warning later to the Army Command, but it was practically ignored. It was not thought possible at that time to manufacture gas shells. It is interesting to note, too, that the Germans had no faith in the idea: they refused its inventor the necessary facilities for the manufacture of gas shells, so that it had to be discharged—as it was a month later at Ypres—from cylinders in the front line; that is to say, it became a very erratic and unreliable weapon. But this is by the way.) Suffice it to say that Colonel Hylton was delighted with the result of my adventure when three days later I threw off my German uniform and returned to my khaki with green tabs.

For the next few months my life was a very varied one. Not only did I carry out my normal routine duties as an Intelligence Officer, but half a dozen times I went as a German among prisoners. If we had taken none I used to

go to an internment camp well behind the lines in France where German prisoners were being used for labour purposes. It was not in such camps that I would get a great deal of information, but I was thinking of bigger things, and I wanted to make absolutely certain that my details were right. I wanted to get inside the skin of the German soldier. I knew his language, but I wanted to learn his modern slang. An educated Englishman going suddenly into the ranks of the British Army during the war might not have understood more than two words in three which he heard spoken about him. So from these prisoners I got slang, the technical talk and its abbreviations, and also—and this might be most important—the current and most popular swears. That my work was appreciated was shown by the fact that I was suddenly promoted to the rank of captain, and placed on the Intelligence Staff of the First Army, which was commanded by Sir Douglas Haig, who of course later became Commander-in-Chief.

It was while on the First Army Staff that I first heard of the preparation of what was later to be known as the Battle of Loos.

Immediately I began to study the projected advance, for I had ideas myself. We were to attack to the north of Lens, while the French attacked to the south. There was a gap of a few miles in between the two offensives, and it was hoped that between us we would be able to pinch out Lens and advance into the open country beyond. The whole success of the scheme, so far as I could see, depended upon whether we could reach open country behind the two organised trench lines before the Germans could bring up reserves—there would be local reserves on the spot, of course, but we ought to be capable of dealing with them. So I began to study railway maps. The railway system around Lens is rather complicated, for it is a mining district, and there are a good many branch lines and sidings. But Lens itself was an almost essential point for any reinforcements reaching either battlefield. From Lens they would march either towards Hulluch or towards Vimy as the situation demanded. There was no other railway except the two main lines leading into Lens which could carry reinforcements on any scale. Now these two lines formed a junction about a mile to the north of the village of Avion. If, therefore, that junction could be put out of action—even for twenty-four hours—during the first day of the battle, then such an event might lead to decisive results. I put forward my idea to my Chief, who was a man of imagination.

Nevertheless, he was something of a pessimist. He said he didn't see how it could possibly be done, but he was quite willing for me to try. He gave me the fullest possible liberty to carry out the scheme, and promised his whole-hearted help in its preparation. Nor did he let me down.

My adventure actually started three weeks before the battle. We had taken a small group of prisoners in a subsidiary attack between La Bassé and Givenchy. As usual, I mingled with these prisoners, suitably uniformed. There was one man among them of about my own height and not unlike me in face; what was far more important, he had an outstanding distinctive feature—his hair was so blonde as to be almost white. Some such characteristic was essential to my purpose. How do you recognise a man? Not by his normalities, but by his abnormal characteristics.

Immediately I saw him I decided that he was my quarry. Consequently, although all the rest were reported as prisoners to the Germans, this particular man was not; and when other prisoners wrote to their families mentioning that Ernst Karkeln was with them their letters were held back for some weeks until my experiment had been completed. For I proposed to take over the identity of this man. I was going over to the German side—as Ernst Karkeln.

For three weeks I lived with the man. I waxed confidential to him, and he talked freely in return. He had no suspicions. Why should he? Particularly since I conversed not on military questions but personalities. He talked for hours on end about his family—about the girl who was waiting to marry him. He showed me her photograph—told me all details about her. He talked of his battalion—which officers were good and which had a very mixed ancestry, dating back for several generations, in which cows and pigs played apparently a very important part. There was little, so it seemed, that I did not know about him. In fact, at the end of three weeks almost literally I was no longer Captain Bernard Newman, but was Private Soldier Ernst Karkeln, of the 138th Bavarian Regiment.

Before I went into the prison camp I had instructed Mason to prepare the remainder of the details of my scheme. How was I to get over the line? That was my difficulty. It might be possible at night to crawl over No Man's Land and gain the German trenches. Nevertheless, it was a very risky proceeding, for I was just as likely to be shot down by Germans as by English. Furthermore, it would not perhaps fit in with my plans. If I did actually reach the German line, having apparently escaped from the English, surely I

would be sent direct to my unit, which would be of no use to me at all. This I gave as the official reason for deciding against the scheme. Actually (I may as well confess it now), what really influenced me was the fact that I would be carrying two or three sticks of dynamite or other suitable explosive, and it needs no imagination to estimate what would happen if a stray shot should chance to strike my pack.

I decided, therefore, to attempt an aeroplane landing behind the German line. It had been done before on three or four occasions when we had desired to land an Intelligence Agent—or shall I call him a spy outright? The difficulty was the getting back by this same method. But Mason worked out a detailed scheme with a very keen young pilot of the Flying Corps, and was able to assure me that it stood a good chance of success.

Timing was all-important. As soon as I knew the exact day of the battle I proposed to go over. Yet I did not intend to do any work on the junction until the night before the battle. Otherwise the damage might easily be repaired before the critical point of the conflict had been reached. This, then, was my scheme. Three or four days before the battle I would be flown over and dropped behind the German line. My pilot had been on several observation flights and reported that there was a good flat area a mile to the south of Bois-Bernard where he could land without difficulty and which seemed to be well away from view. He also pointed out—for many of his kind were great believers in luck—that there might be an omen of good-fortune in the name of the village. He, of course, would leave immediately, without stopping his engine, and I would drop at once into my new part. The landing, I need hardly say, must be accomplished at night—not an easy task in those days with no ground flares to guide us—but he was a smart pilot; there was half a moon, and he was quite confident that he could do it. I would then be Ernst Karkeln, a German soldier just returning from leave to rejoin his unit. Were I challenged, immediately I had a story ready—that I had been put in the wrong train at Douai and had found myself at Arras instead of Lens. My papers were in perfect order—our Intelligence Staff had seen to that, for our forgery department was second to none—and as a final guarantee of my identity I carried the actual papers of the real Karkeln, including the photograph of his girl Irma. I was quite ready to describe the charms of Irma to any one who came along.

The attack, at first dated for September 15th, was eventually postponed until September the 25th. On the

night of the 21st I got into the aeroplane and my pilot, flying very high, crossed the German lines. He went far beyond our destination before he came down almost silently (for he had switched off his engine) towards the spot he had observed. Several times he swooped in great circles around the field. There was no sign of any life. The rising moon gave him sufficient light and he chanced the landing. It was certainly bumpy. At first I thought that he must have broken his landing wheels, which would have been very awkward for him, as he would have been unable to take off. However, a hurried examination proved that there was nothing amiss. He gave me a handshake, and a final whisper of good luck, and a minute later his aeroplane was again speeding through the sky. And there was I—an Englishman, but now a German; no longer on the English side but on the German side. I felt excited but very confident. I could explain everything to everybody—except to my own regiment—because, of course, they were under the impression that I was lying dead beyond the German line. I was Private Ernst Karkeln, complete with abnormally blonde hair.

I lay down in a wood until it was light, then stepped out boldly towards Lens. Why should I hide myself? Had not a German soldier a right to walk behind his own line? At Mericourt I was challenged by a military policeman. I showed him my papers and told him my story about having got the wrong train; he was perfectly satisfied and allowed me to proceed. Early in the afternoon I reached Lens. The first thing to do was to find some place where I could take shelter for a day or two. My leave, according to my papers, had not yet expired,* so I had sufficient time to scout round and find out the potentialities of attack.

It had been given the addresses of three civilians who were acting as British or French agents in Lens. Yet I hesitated to declare myself to them, because a false word would have ruined my plans. In any case I was never so certain about the integrity of these civilian agents as were some of our Staff officers. I did walk round, however, and have a look at the three houses, and when I found that one of them was an *estaminet* in which eight or ten German soldiers were sitting drinking, I had no hesitation in entering. Even then, however, I gave no hint as to my identity or purpose. All I did was to ask the fat old lady behind the bar if she could recommend some house where I might stay for the night. I pointed out that my leave had not yet expired, and who wanted to return to the trenches a day

* Actually I had with me several sets of papers bearing different dates.

before they need do so? I wanted a place, I said, where I could rest and be quiet. I emphasised the quietness. I whispered to her that I did not wish the military police to know that I was staying in Lens. Otherwise they might ask too many questions—although I had a proper and satisfactory explanation. She said at once that she knew the very place for me. The girl of the house—her father was a railwayman—hated the military police just as much as I did, for she had had to suffer their insults on more than one occasion. There was an alternative house, the old woman said, where I might stay. There were two girls in that house, beautiful girls, and if I wished—her wink was more than suggestive. But the moment she had mentioned that word "railwayman" my mind was made up. Obviously this was the place I wanted.

I shouted good-bye to the men with whom I had been drinking and went out to find my billet. The man was at home eating his evening meal. He explained to me that he was on night duty and just about to set off for work. His wife was bedridden and he left it to his daughter to arrange the necessary terms. She was a typical girl of the district, not particularly good-looking, but strong, bigly built and very active. Her name was Suzanne, and she proved to be a very good friend to me.

I did not go abroad that evening in case there should be some system of patrolling the streets which might lead to my discomfiture. Instead, I stayed in and talked to Suzanne. Immediately I had told her that the landlady of the *estaminet* round the corner had sent me to her she looked at me very curiously. Suddenly, after I had talked to her for an hour or so on every subject under the sun—although she had kept me at the distance proper between a French girl and a German soldier, she had been perfectly friendly—suddenly she exclaimed: "Since when have you been a German?" I was flabbergasted as she continued accusingly: "You are no German. You are French!" Of course I protested vehemently, but she would not hear me—although I could insist with truth that I was not French at all. "We have been talking about dancing. Now say to me in French, 'I want to dance with you twenty times.'" I said it, and immediately she gave a cry of triumph. "I knew it," she said. "There, no German could ever say *danser* properly—and certainly he can never get the *v* in *vingt* right. In any case," she continued, more seriously, "when some one is sent to me by Madame Sophie I am looking for something. You might just as well be honest

with me, for I knew immediately I saw you that you were not what you appeared to be."

This naturally gave me a bit of a shock. I wished at first that I had left Madame Sophie and her damned *estaminet* a mile behind, and had sought out quarters entirely for myself, unassisted by French Intelligence agents. But as it happened I had no cause to regret the chance which led me to Suzanne.

There are some people whom you trust almost implicitly from the first hour. Suzanne was one of these. I discovered later that—although she had done no actual intelligence work—she had, on occasions, carried messages from Madame Sophie to some one in Douai. As Suzanne was quite unsuspected, she could do this without inviting the attention of the police.

Before the end of the evening I decided to confide the whole plan to her. It might be a risk, but it had to be taken. Already, by some intuitive instinct, she had guessed that I was something unusual. If she were a traitor she could denounce me already. But Suzanne was no traitor.

She agreed that neither her father nor mother must know anything whatsoever of what was happening. Although we wanted information from her father, it must be got in a roundabout manner. Yes, she said, he would be able to tell us anything that was wanted. He had been a shunter at the siding at Avion, within half a mile of the main junction, for a good many years.

The next day, walking casually along by the road which led by the railway, I spied out the land. My first choice, which I had made by the map, was the obvious one. My next task was to find how it was guarded. There was a signal-box close by, and I noticed a sentry on guard. Apart from this one man, however, there seemed to be no question of interference, for the next sentry was a good quarter of a mile away.

That evening over the meal we pumped Suzanne's father for all we were worth. I let her ask the questions, since already she knew half the answers from previous conversations, and she knew well what I wanted. Soon I found out several important facts. One, that while troop trains came by the northern Douai-Lens line, supplies were usually transmitted by the southern line, which branches off the Douai-Arras line a few miles south-west of Douai. I learned also that the ordinary divisional supply trains worked to fixed routine and were seldom more than a few minutes out of their time every night. What was more important, I

found that the man on sentry at the signal-box had formed an unofficial habit of going into the signalman's cabin about two o'clock in the morning, when the signalman made coffee, and taking coffee with him. He would only be away from his post for a matter of five or ten minutes ; and all the while, if he cared to look, he could watch the line through the windows of the signal-box. Nevertheless the fact was well worth remarking.

So far my plans had proceeded literally without a hitch —unless my unmasking by Suzanne could be called a hitch— but on the actual day of my attempt to wreck the railway I had the fright of my life. For that day I wandered about Lens for an hour or so, looking out for useful details without the slightest interference. Any town behind the line on either side naturally contained a large number of unattached soldiers who might legitimately be in the streets on all kinds of errands. The military police could not possibly detain every one. Nor would it be policy to do so, for official business would become impossible. But even as I was returning to Suzanne's house for a last meal I was halted by a sergeant of military police. He was perfectly friendly, however—in fact, he was a surprising contrast to some of the military police I had met in our own army, whose conduct was not always particularly edifying on all occasions. Indeed, when I considered that this man was a German and the German discipline was supposed to be about ten times as severe as ours, I pondered very deeply. For, after examining my papers, he was perfectly satisfied, but pointed out that I would have to hurry if I was to join my regiment by midnight, for this was the hour that was marked on the papers which I showed—I have mentioned that I carried two or three of these leave papers each with a different date. He was good enough to tell me the nearest way to Hulluch, and actually put me in touch with a lorry-driver who was taking a load of barbed wire to an engineer's depôt that same evening. Naturally I thanked him very much for this information and advice, and promised to avail myself of it. So I went into the nearest café, ostensibly for a final drink, and then moved on in the direction that he had indicated. After half an hour I reversed, and got back to Suzanne's house by a roundabout route.

One thing I was very disturbed to notice in Lens : Our attack was ostensibly a secret, yet every one knew about it. Already local reserves had been warned to be in readiness ; yet I saw no sign of army reserves in the neighbourhood. Maybe it was not too late, although either our over-zealous

and easily-seen preparations (or more probably loose tongue-wagging somewhere in Staff or political circles) had given the Germans the hint that the attack was about to come off. When I say Staff circles I don't necessarily mean English Staff circles : my experience was that eighty per cent of the information which found itself in German hands and which ought not to have done came from French G.Q.G., for many of their officers were far too talkative : their politicians were quite incorrigible, even at the most critical phases of the war.

About one o'clock in the morning I left the house, prepared to do or die, or even both. Suzanne wanted to come with me, but of course I would not hear of it. This was no woman's job. It might even not be a man's. I made my way without challenge to the railway and hid myself in a ditch beside it, keeping a careful eye on the sentry. He had a beat, and was walking up and down, for the night air was chilly. In fact, in my ditch I was deadly cold, for the grass was wet and my feet were in water. At two o'clock, however, the expected happened. I saw the door of the signal cabin open and one of the signalmen came to the door. The German went inside. I could see him drinking his coffee. Even if there was official connivance in taking the coffee, certainly this man failed in his duty, for his back was turned to half of the track which he was supposed to guard. This was my opportunity. I had, of course, everything prepared. Very quickly I slipped two charges under the rail nearest to me and prepared the fuse. Then I went back to my ditch to wait for something to come.

I knew I ought not to have long to wait. A supply train was due at half-past two, but actually it arrived nearly half an hour late. This accident, however, helped my plan, for, to my joy, I saw another train advancing on the other line. If the engine-driver were alert it might be possible for him to pull up in time. Otherwise disaster would be certain.

It was. I timed my fuse so that the charge did not explode until the engine had passed. Necessarily it was only a light charge, since I had carried it in my pack, but it was quite sufficient to twist the metals and fling the trucks with violence on to their side. In fact, it was a hopeless smash, and to my glee the leading truck fell over the actual junction—that is to say, it would be quite impossible for a train on either track to pass until the line had been cleared. Then I watched. Would the other train pull up in time ? No, it was impossible. It was but a hundred yards away, and with an even louder

crash the engine ran at a good speed straight on into the maze of shattered trucks all over the line.

The confusion was redoubled. Already men were shouting and running from all directions. I myself rushed to the scene. There was no reason whatsoever why I should not see precisely what damage I had done, and in any case it would not do for me to be found hiding in the ditch. Before I reached the actual spot where the troop-train had derailed and some of the coaches had turned over, however, there was a terrific explosion. I was flung backwards, and it was lucky for me that I was still on comparatively soft ground. As it was, when I got up I found myself bleeding in half a dozen places, although on investigation the wounds proved to be the slightest of abrasions.

What had happened? It was soon fairly obvious. The engine of the troop-train had charged right into the middle of a truck loaded with ammunition, and two or three trucks of heavy shells had exploded. The scene was appalling. I ought to have jumped for joy, because now there was no question of a mere twenty-four hour delay. Even with hundreds of men and dozens of cranes available it would be at least a week before this track could be cleared and relaid. My job was done and well done. Had I not been a sentimental fool I would have cleared out at once and gone back to Bois-Bernard, there to pick up my pilot and to return home. But, alas, although I had been in the army for over a year, I was still a civilian. I simply could not face the appalling scene about me. There must have been several hundred men in the train, and the greater part of them were killed or wounded by the explosion. On every hand men were groaning, screaming and hurt. It was more than I could stand. Foolishly I allowed my better nature to get on top of me—better nature is a poor comrade in war. I went to some of the men and began to give what help I could. I tore up the clothes of dead men to make bandages for the living. I worked at frantic speed. Every few minutes I said to myself, "You idiot, you *must* get away. You'll get caught, as safe as houses. Every one will be suspicious now. They might easily round up all the men on the spot. Get away, you fool!" Then I would catch sight of some poor brute lying maimed and helpless, and would go to his aid.

By the time the situation was in hand I was completely all out. The mental strain, the physical work and the revulsion of the scene had affected me greatly. By now, of course, hundreds of men were on the spot, and medical officers were attending to the wounded. An orderly came to me, seeing

that I was exhausted, and not only insisted that I should cease work, but led me off to a medical officer who roughly bandaged my wounds and ordered me to hospital. As he was dressing me, a major who had taken charge of the relief operations came up to him. "This man deserves recognition," the doctor said after a little conversation. "He has worked tremendously hard and has done a lot of good work." The major turned to me and demanded my name and regiment, which of course I had to give, and he promised me that my colonel should know of my good conduct. I might even, he said, be recommended for a decoration. The fat was properly in the fire now, I thought, as I was hauled up in an ambulance to hospital for further treatment. What an idiot I had been! Why had I not followed my second instinct, rushed at once to Suzanne to have my wounds dressed, and then made a bee-line to Bois-Bernard? Now I was going into hospital, and it might be the very devil of a job getting out.

At hospital I was treated remarkably well. Apparently the driver passed on the word that I had done useful work on the spot. The doctor who treated me took the greatest pains with my small wounds. Then I was put to bed, and in spite of my mental agitation, so great was my exhaustion that I slept for an hour. When I woke up I stared hard at the man in the next bed. It was the sergeant of military police who had offered to find me the lift to Hulluch!

Immediately I had to think of excuses. He wanted to know, of course, why I had not done as he suggested. I told him that I had lost my way and had missed the man with the lorry. Even that did not explain why I had not set out out on foot. There could be no explanation to that, so I pretended that I was still confused. It was quite obvious that he was suspicious—not that I was anything but what I professed to be, but that I had deliberately neglected to join my regiment. Fortunately he too had heard the story about my conduct on the scene of the smash, and he hinted that it was a good job that I had such a record to show to get me out of trouble when eventually I did report to my battalion.

Maybe he was waiting for my brain to clear a little. But if so he waited too long, for suddenly there came through orders to clear the hospital at once. The expected attack had materialised, and hundreds of casualties might be expected within the next few hours. I, of course, was not a wounded case at all. My scratches, if they could only be kept clean for two or three days, would not cause me the slightest trouble. So I was fitted up with a uniform—for my

own was soaked in blood—and actually given a letter of recommendation to the colonel of my regiment. So once more I set off, not towards Hulluch, but towards the regimental depôt at Carvin. By this time, I was told, Hulluch was in the hands of the English. I had to restrain my jubilation.*

I was at any rate glad to see that there was apparently no suspicion whatsoever but that the disaster had been a pure accident. That was where the second explosion—that of the ammunition trucks—had been a godsend to me, for the destruction it caused would, I hoped, completely eradicate all traces of the small explosion which had started the affair. So I set off on the road towards Carvin with a light heart, determined at the earliest possible moment to turn south to my rendezvous with young Palmer.

I was very intrigued to see the great confusion behind the German front—I had imagined that we on our side had a monopoly of confusion, but it was obvious that some of their commanders were really rattled. Troops were being hurried towards the front along the very roads down which other troops were streaming back. I talked with as many as I could of the latter. They said that they had suffered a tremendous defeat, that the English had broken right through, and that the *fräulein* soldiers (as they called the Highlanders) were actually in the suburbs of Lens. I chuckled beneath my anxious face. It was obvious that the minimum of reserves were on the spot if our attacking forces had already reached the suburbs of Cité St. Auguste. Then all we had to do was to throw in our reserves and Lens was ours. Behind the town was open country—and no reinforcement on any large scale could arrive for many hours.

At nightfall I turned about and began to make my way south. Several times I passed military police, but no one had any questions, so great was the confusion of troops passing and counter-marching in all directions. I had no map and had to depend upon memory and intuition, and in the darkness I lost my way and found myself on the outskirts of Lens again. There seemed to be something wrong. If we had been in the suburbs of Lens in the morning, why were we not in the place itself by now? Then another idea came into my head. If we were so near occupying Lens, why should I not lie low in a cellar and wait until the English did arrive? I decided to call in at Suzanne's house for further information.

I did, but she had none. She was tremendously con-

* Premature!

cerned to see me. She fully realised the danger of my position and urged me to go at once to the clearing near Bois-Bernard. I needed little urging when I found that the noise of battle had come no nearer to Lens during the day—in fact, it appeared to have largely died out—and off I set again on my lonely journey. My path led close by the junction, the scene of my exploit. As I was passing I saw officers examining the line by the light of great flares and, to my discomfiture, a witness was the sergeant of military police, who was evidently giving his version of the events of the previous night,

At once I turned about, intending to make a big circle around the scene ; but my luck was out—that police sergeant was indeed my albatross. He sent one of his men running towards me. He must have had keen eyesight, for I was a hundred yards away at the time, and although the light of the flares was strong, it was by no means daylight. Now, I said to myself, I am surely done for. This is the third time this man has hauled me up ; although he won't have any suspicions, he will have me arrested as a deserter. And that is precisely what happened.

The officers were endeavouring to ascertain the cause of the disaster, for the Railway Transport Officer at Lens had apparently refused to believe that it could be by accident ; and then, by an atrocious piece of bad luck, they had found a small portion of fuse which had not been consumed when I had fired my charge. I saw a Staff officer holding it in his hands, looking at it with great curiosity. Yet I retained my calm. How could he tell that the fuse had anything to do with me ?

But I had to face at once the catechism of the police sergeant. "What the hell are you thinking of, man ?" he cried. "You do yourself a good turn and then undo it all again by not obeying orders. Don't you realise that you have overstayed your leave in such a manner that you are now classed as a deserter ? What have you to say for yourself ?"

I began telling him a long story about how I had got to Carvin, and had found that my regimental depôt had moved back and nobody knew where it was, so that I had returned to Lens to get further orders. By this time he was suspicious —that is to say, he refused to believe that I had made any serious effort to get in touch with my regiment. Naturally, he had no suspicion otherwise. He turned to one of the Staff officers. "This man, sir," he said, "says that the depôt of the 138th Bavarian Regiment has been moved from Carvin. Can you confirm that ?"

"No, that isn't so," the Staff officer replied. "I was on the phone to them there only this afternoon."

The military policeman looked at me very sourly. "I think you had better come along with me," he said. "I'll hand you over to my Chief."

Without ceremony one of his men and himself escorted me to the office of the German equivalent of Town Major. By this time I knew that the slightest slip would mean complete exposure. The only thing to do was to brazen things out. Soon the telephone was humming. The Town Major laid down his receiver, turned to me and said, "Why did you say your depôt was no longer at Carvin? It is. I am just talking to your adjutant now."

"Then I must have got lost. I got to what I thought was Carvin, but there is such confusion on the road to-day owing to the battle that I might easily have been mistaken."

He got on to the telephone again and I heard one end of his conversation—which disconcerted me, yet gave me an idea of what to say next.

"Your adjutant tells me that you were reported missing five weeks ago," he said.

"That's quite right," I agreed. "I was taken prisoner by the English, but I escaped a week ago and was then given leave. I am just on the way to rejoin my regiment. Evidently the adjutant does not know that I escaped."

He asked a good many more questions of the same type, punctuating them with telephone conversations with my adjutant. At last he turned to me and said: "There's obviously only one thing to do. I shall send you under escort back to your unit for trial. It's a very lucky thing for you that you have this letter of recommendation with you, because at the time of a battle court-martials are apt to make the first example that they possibly can."

So off along the Carvin road I passed again, this time in a light lorry with an armed policeman on guard over me. Naturally I made no attempt to escape. All the while I sat quiet, chatting only very occasionally to my escort, but thinking deeply of what I had learned from the man I was impersonating. I felt fairly confident, because surely I had pumped Ernst of everything of his family history. From his description I recognised the adjutant as soon as I saw him, but my heart fell when by his side I saw a Staff officer. I had seen him before—by the light of the fires at the scene of the smash, holding a small piece of fuse in his hand!

It was the Staff officer who opened the investigation. "Do you recognise this man?" he asked of the adjutant.

"Certainly I do. He is Private Ernst Karkeln, who was reported missing after the little attack five weeks ago."

"You have not seen him since?" said the officer.

"No."

"He has never been reported to you as having escaped, or having been sent on leave?"

"No," the adjutant confirmed. "Certainly not. That is what amazes me. Surely we would be informed at once in the event of his escape."

"You are quite satisfied that this is the man?"

"Quite," said the adjutant; "at least, so far as I can see. I don't know him too well: his hair is distinctive. But if you want to be quite certain, let us bring in some of his immediate non-commissioned officers to identify him."

"Better still," the Staff officer pointed out, "let us see if he can identify some of the officers or men in his battalion.'

This remark frightened me intensely, for I knew from that moment that he was definitely suspicious of me.

However, I came through my first test with flying colours. I affected some show of disciplined indignation. "But, sir, this is absurd," I cried to the adjutant. "Of course I am Ernest Karkeln. Do I not know you, Captain Norden? Do I not know Sergeant-Major Lyck and Orderly-Room Clerk Heide? And of those men outside is not the sergeant with the ginger moustache Sergeant Thurowen? I forget the name of the corporal with him."

"Well, that sounds all right!" said the adjutant. But the other officer was still unsatisfied. He was a cute man—after my own heart, except that I would far rather have him on my side than on the other.

"Send for some of his personal friends," he commanded, and I waited anxiously. About five minutes later I felt happier, for four men were marched into the office—and three of them, either from description or from photographs which my involuntary tutor had shown me, I knew at once—and, what was more, knew a considerable amount about them. The fourth, unfortunately, I could not place. It was strange to see their eyes light up at the sight of me. Great grins spread across their faces in spite of the foreboding presence of the two officers. They had, of course, given me up for dead, as I had not been reported a prisoner.

"Do you know this man?" asked the adjutant of them.

"Of course!" they replied almost in unison. "He is Ernst Karkeln."

"And do you know them?" asked the Staff officer of me.

"Of course!" I echoed. The first man on the right is

Henrik Domnau. His father is a baker in Munich. He has a wife and two children, but he forgets his wife occasionally. He can tell you a very good story about a brothel in Lille." Henrik looked hard at the ground. The others grinned, and even the adjutant lost his stern expression.

"I seem to have heard something about that," he remarked. "Something about the man's clothes being taken away, was it not?"

"That was it. And next to him is Josef Friedlander. When I was taken prisoner he was serving a sentence of seven days' punishment for dropping the officers' coffee."

"Is that so?" asked the Staff officer. The adjutant agreed that it was so.

"And the third man," I said, "is Peter Mayr. He and I have been in the regiment together since the beginning of the war. He can tell you all the campaigns we have made. We fought against the French in Alsace, where he was wounded, but very soon came back to us. Then we were transferred to Arras and later to here. I can tell you any details you like." I did, in fact. I gave them quite as much detail of the regimental history during the war as ever a private soldier would be expected to know, but the Staff officer did not seem to be interested, and I knew I was making no headway. These things could be found out from other sources, as both he and I knew very well. He interrupted me in the middle of a sentence. "And the fourth man?" he asked. There he had got me. I did not recognise the fourth man at all. I thought back of all that Ernst Karkeln had inadvertently told me. I had a detailed description of fifteen or twenty people and some casual notes about another hundred stored away in my memory, but none of them fitted this man—a mere youth of eighteen or so who was grinning at me in friendly fashion.

"Of course I recognise him," I explained, "but I can't just think who he is. I had a nasty knock when the English took me prisoner, and it may have affected my memory."

"That means that you don't know this man at all?" suggested the Staff officer. "Yet you know the others!"

"Of course I do," I protested. "I recognise him quite well, but I can't think who he is."

"I see," he said. Then he ordered the four men to march out of the room. There was no one left but the adjutant, Staff officer and attendant police.

"I think you may as well confess at once," he said, "that you are not what you appear to be. In fact, you are an English or French spy."

So it had come to that! Although I knew throughout the whole of the interrogation how thin was my line of safety, I had not quite realised that his suspicion was so certain.

"Listen," he continued. "A night ago there was a terrible train tragedy at Lens at which you assisted in helping the wounded. Where were you when the collision occurred?"

"I have explained before," I said, "that I had a toothache and I was taking a walk because I could not go to sleep. I can show you the tooth, if you like."

"Oh!" he exclaimed. "There is no doubt, I suppose, that it was a genuine collision? You heard no sound of an explosion just before the supply train crashed?"

"None at all. I saw the trucks turn over on to the line, and then a few seconds later the other train ran into it."

"Oh!" he continued. "Then you would be surprised to know that the rails under the supply train were blown up?"

"Very surprised!" I agreed.

"You have never seen anything like this before?" He laid the small fragment of fuse on the table before me.

"Yes, I have," I declared, for I saw that I must be very bold. "It looks like a piece of fuse."

"It is a piece of fuse," he said. "What is more, it is English fuse. It is a part of the fuse that was used to blow up the supply train. Now have you anything further to say?"

"Nothing at all," I protested. "Why should I?"

"Because," he continued, every word firmly emphasised, "a few threads of fuse like this were found in your pack by the Town Major of Lens."

This was a bombshell. Nevertheless, I had a story ready. He laid a few thin strings of cotton on the table beside me.

"There is nothing peculiar about that," I claimed. "We captured quite a quantity of explosives from the English some months ago, and quite a lot of us kept back small lengths of fuses. They are very useful for blowing out rat holes. Some of us are very keen on ratting, and there is plenty of good sport about here."

"You have a tale ready for anything," he complained. "But this last one is not very convincing. Is it true that you captured explosives from the English?" he asked the adjutant.

"Yes, we did, though I did not know there were fuses among them. We captured rifle ammuniton and some very strange home-made bombs made out of jam tins."

"Exactly," I broke in. "These fuses were used to explode the bomb."

"Very well. We will pass over that for the moment. Now you say again that you do not recognise that fourth man?"

"No, except that I do know him, of course," I agreed. "I can't just place him."

"You have a fiancée back in Munich, I believe, named Irma Donau?" He suggested.

"That is so," I agreed. "I have her photograph here." I pulled it out and showed it to him.

"You have known Irma for a good many years?" he continued.

"Why, yes," I said. "We have been affianced for three years, but I have known her practically the whole of her life."

"And her family, too?"

"Of course," I agreed. "I used to go round to supper every Sunday evening before the War."

"Then how comes it," he cried triumphantly, "that you did not recognise her brother, whom you must also have known for the whole of his life?"

This was a shocker. I suddenly recollected that Ernst had told me surprisingly little about Irma's family—principally because he had not got on with them very well. But now with Irma's brother on the premises—well, the danger was only too obvious. For just a fraction of a second my mask slipped and the Staff officer had dashed in and penetrated my defence. Any police officer will tell you that you are half-way towards proving a man guilty if you are certain that he is guilty. That was my unhappy position as the guilty man. Irma's brother was brought back. The Staff officer had a private conversation with him, and the youth began to ask me all sorts of intimate questions about Irma's past. I was immediately out of my depth. I pretended that I was confused, that the knock I had received when captured had upset my memory. I knew that it was a poor story. My memory had been good enough to reel out a list of engagements in which the battalion had taken part. It would not so suddenly go phut now. After a very unhappy twenty minutes the Staff officer dismissed Irma's brother and turned to me.

"I think you might as well throw up the sponge. You have done very well and have done an enormous amount of damage. Nevertheless, I think you now stand completely unmasked. There is ample evidence. You will be tried by court-martial either to-morrow or the day after."

I was marched off and placed in a hut under heavy guard. I tried hard to think of a way out, but it seemed to me that I was completely trapped and cornered. The only thing to do was to play upon my supposed confusion in the mind—if necessary, to pretend that I was mentally deranged. But, alas, all my schemes fell to pieces when I was marched into the room where the court-martial was to be held. The customary three officers sat in their places, a grave and rather elderly colonel, a young subaltern and a captain—and as I gazed at the captain I had a fit of cold shivers. I had seen him before—he was one of the Bavarian officers with whom we had fraternised on Christmas Day!

Would he recognise me? I have said that I was not disguised in any external way, except for my hair. I had merely adopted the personality of the other man. Would he recognise me? The question was soon answered. Even as my guard were stamping their rifles to attention he glanced up from his papers and saw me. I saw a look of astonishment spreading over his face. I gazed at him calmly and steadily, showing no trace of recognition whatsoever. But it was too much to be a coincidence: I could almost see his mind working. He knew I spoke fluent German, for at the time I had had no reason to conceal it. The look of wonderment passed from his face: a cold calculation replaced it.

The court-martial opened. The first witnesses gave their evidence. The Bavarian captain did not appear to be listening; he was still thinking hard. Suddenly, in an interval between witnesses, he whispered to the President, whose eyes stared in surprise.

"Could it be done?" I heard the captain ask.

"Yes, it is possible;" the President seemed hesitant. "It is unusual, but——"

"It would settle the case, would it not?"

"Yes, that is so. Very well, I agree. The court is adjourned for an hour."

What was in the wind? I knew by now that my position was hopeless. I was almost certain to be condemned on the existing evidence, but if the Bavarian captain claimed to recognise me——

I was marched back into the room.

"Have you got them?" the President asked of a military policeman.

"Yes, sir. The commandant of the prisoners' enclosure asked that they might be returned."

"Of course. Put them on the prisoner."

And I saw through the scheme as the policeman produced

a British officer's cap and greatcoat! I protested—why should I be forced to wear an enemy uniform? But of course it was useless.

"Well?" asked the President.

The captain had no hesitation. "Yes," he said, "it is quite definite. He is a British officer. We talked to him during the unofficial truce on Christmas Day. I remember him particularly because of the fluency of his German—one of my colleagues, in fact, was convinced that he must be one of our agents working on the British side."

"You are quite certain?"

"Absolutely, sir. Only the colour of his hair is changed—that is what made me hesitate at first. But now I am certain. If you wish, I will retire from the court and give evidence on oath."

That finished me, of course. I need not describe the rest of the trial in full because the result was obvious right from that moment. After half an hour, in fact, I saw the hopelessness of trying to argue it out and threw up my hands completely. I should emphasise that I was treated very fairly and was given every opportunity that I could possibly want of asking questions or cross-examining witnesses. But of course it was quite hopeless. I would have had a very difficult job in getting round the circumstantial evidence of the fuse, the non-recognition of Irma's brother and my other little lapse, but my recognition by this officer had made all these pieces of evidence trivial in comparison. At least by confessing everything I would be treated as an officer and not as a paid spy. But I wonder what instinct prompted me not to reveal my name?

The President of the Court did, in fact, so treat me with dignity and fairness. He informed me that all my wishes would be scrupulously carried out. Nevertheless, of course, there was but one verdict and one sentence. The verdict was "Guilty," and the sentence "To be shot at dawn the following morning."

I was hurried back to Lens, where the civilian prison was now occupied by military police; it was already late afternoon. I had something like twelve hours to live. I sat in my cell and began to think again.

Rather strangely I found myself not afraid of certain death. That is not really so strange as it may sound. Actually, I have found in battle time after time that the soldier's fear is not so much of death as of pain. I was perfectly cheerful as I prepared my thoughts for my fate the following morning. I have never been so calm. At first the end seemed absolutely

inevitable, but naturally I spied around to see if there remained one chance, however minute, of escape.

It was not very hopeful. My cell was one of a series in a long corridor. It was securely locked and it was quite impossible to force the door. In the passage outside patrolled an armed soldier. I timed his patrol and found that he passed my door about every ten minutes—and as I was an interesting and unusual prisoner he peeped through the wire-guarded little hole in the window every time he passed. Evidently he had the strictest orders to look after me. So, considering everything, I decided that the end had come. I had now only to look forward to death. As the soldier passed on his patrol I called out to him and asked him to send the Governor of the prison to me.

He came. He was a very decent old fellow, sorry indeed to see an English officer in such a plight. It was obvious that he held a strong admiration for what I had done. He was a fairly elderly man, and, doubtless, for him the war would pass without any outstanding military glory. He bore me no spite at all. We talked about such things as *espirit de corps* among officers. I told him, for example, of how the submarine officer who sank the *Aboukir*, *Hogue*, and *Cressy* was held in high esteem in the British Navy, despite the tremendous damage he had caused. The Governor, for his part, did his utmost to make my last hours easy. He told me I could command what food I wanted, and any wishes within reason he would be only too glad to carry out. As I could think of absolutely nothing to ask for that would help me in any way to escape, I could only ask for writing materials to pen my last letters home ; but I did also ask that he would take some steps to procure an English uniform, that I might be shot in my own uniform and not in that of my " adopted " country. He promised to do this without fail. It was long after dark when he left me, and by the time he had returned with the writing materials all about was very quiet : the uniform would be ready before the morning, he promised.

It was he himself who made the suggestion which was to have such tremendous consequences, for he asked if I would like to see a chaplain. Strangely enough I had never thought of this, although it is the usual thing to do when a man is about to die. Nor, for I must confess it frankly, was I tremendously keen on seeing a chaplain as such, for in his last hours (as at any other time) an ordinary man is just as capable of communing with his Maker by himself as by the assistance of any outside person. However, in my state I was rather glad to see any one. There were a lot of small com-

missions which I would like to be done, and a chaplain would probably be able to execute them better than the Governor of the prison. In fact it was his job, so I agreed at once that I would like to see him.

While I was awaiting him I began my last letter home, and it was not until I was in the middle of my letter to my mother, who was dearer to me than any one else in the world, did I realise how near to death I stood. I experienced a sense of futility. I felt as I had often felt before when I saw young men going to their death in battle—that my life was being wasted. After all, there must be a great deal which I could do for England and for humanity, and now I was to disappear into the void. I had done something, it was true, but I felt I could do even bigger things. I left off writing in the middle of the letter, and once again paced about the cell. Was there absolutely no chance of escape? Was there any possibility of a last minute reprieve? The answer to those questions was an obvious and very emphatic negative. Had I built a cell for a prisoner myself I could not have done it more strongly and securely; and as for a reprieve—well, the damage I had done and the lives I had caused to be lost gave their own condemnation to such a vain hope.

But at the moment the chaplain entered my cell once again I felt a gleam of hope. The Governor, having ushered him in, left us alone. I asked how long I was to be allowed and the Governor replied that there was no time limit. Doubtless I had a good many last commisions, which the chaplain would be only too glad to attend to. I thanked him very heartily, and said that I hoped my business would not occupy more than an hour or so, as I did not wish to deprive the chaplain of his night's rest.

Even before the Governor retired, leaving us alone, I was taking an acute stock of my new visitor, for in the sight of him some new hope had been born in my brain. He was a man ten or fifteen years older than I was, not quite so tall, and of a slightly lighter build. His looks did not resemble mine in the least, for his hair was very dark whereas mine was dyed fair. In addition he wore a dark moustache of the tooth-brush variety so popular at that time in both the British and German Armies: he also wore spectacles with a powerful lens. Nevertheless, my experience as an actor told me in five seconds that, given a supply of hair dye, crepe hair and spirit gum, I could easily pass myself off as this chaplain. This alone was enough to create a new hope in my heart.

He began to talk to me very quietly and sympathetically. Naturally he spoke of matters of the soul, endeavouring to

prepare me for the eternity which I must face in the earliest hours of the morning. I listened to him seriously, looking hard at him the while. Actually, I scarcely heard a word of his homily ; all the time my brain was a whiling activity. My scheme, which took less than five minutes to evolve, was doubtless crude, but my position was desperate. Even if I failed I could be in no worse position.

Under the pretence of getting a better light I moved the small camp table with which I had been provided. The patrolling sentry rushed to my door at once when he heard the movement of the table, but I set him at his ease by asking him to fetch another chair for the use of the chaplain. This brought, we both sat down, under the eyes of the sentry, at the table ; and very casually I so arranged things that we both sat with our backs to the door. Then, before the sentry marched off on his ten-minute patrol, we were both immersed in the letters which I had been writing, and I was giving the chaplain my last instructions.

At all costs I must play my part, thinking well ahead. Everything must be done in ten-minute intervals. So, when the sentry next returned and peeped through the little window my head was in my hands, bowed over the table. Evidently my spirit was failing me, for the chaplain was addressing me seriously and sympathetically. The moment the sentry had passed I recovered. Then, standing up and talking over the chaplain's shoulder, I began to point out one or two details that I had written down to which I would like attention to be given.

The first critical moment had arrived. I was thinking back ten years to my boyhood days at Lodstone Hall. There in the village lived a poacher named Zicky Porter. He had made so many appearances before the local magistrates that he himself had lost count of the number of his convictions—although he was, as he used to say, a centurion. But, in spite of his many deviations from the path of rectitude as laid down by man-made laws, Zicky was a great fellow, naturally popular with the youth of the village and even with the elders, since he was such a wonderful man with animals. There never was a dog for ten miles around which would not leave its master to run to Zicky's beckoning whistle. He had always been a great favourite of mine and, though I ought to blush to confess it, I had been out with him more than once on his nocturnal patrols—I had even committed the heinous crime of poaching my own father's rabbits ! And as I stood behind the chaplain I recollected one of the little tips which Zicky had given me, seated in a ditch in the middle of an

autumn night. We had just caught a rabbit. He held up the rabbit by its ears, administered a sharp slap with the side of his hand, and the rabbit was dead. He went on to show me the exact spot on the neck where you must hit the rabbit. He also declared that there was a similar spot on the human neck which, if slapped sharply, would not indeed kill a man but would knock him completely unconscious. He went so far as to show me on my own neck the exact spot on which the rabbit puch must be used—a short jerky slap hard with the side of the hand on a spot about half an inch below the lobe of the ear. I had never actually tied this rabbit punch on a human being, for want of a suitable subject, but it was the only possibility available to me now. I could have laid out the pardre with a struggle, but not without noise, so I determined to risk everything—including my life—on Zicky's rabbit punch.

The chaplain, bending over my papers, could not have put his neck in a more favourable position if he had tried Twice I lifted my hand and twice I hesitated. Was it some old ingrained inhibition that restrained me—was there something inside me which forbade me to strike a man of God? But when a man is approaching certain death such inhibitions are easily suppressed. The third time I raised my hand there was no voice of conscience—or anything else—to stop me. His face fell sharply on to the table before him ; he made no further movement. Zicky's rabbit punch had indeed justified itself.

Now I had to work very quickly. I had about five minutes left. Very hurriedly I stripped the chaplain's greatcoat from him and donned it myself : hastily I added his heavy-lensed glasses. Then I put him in my own chair and arranged him in the last position in which the guard had seen him—that is, his head sunk in his arms. I turned my own head away so that he should not notice my hair. There was no time to do more—if you find it difficult to believe that this occupied five minutes, just try to take an overcoat off an unconscious man. The guard came, peeped in, but saw nothing to rouse his suspicions, So far as he could see, I was still rather overcome, and the chaplain was still droning his melancholy sympathy—for it was quite easy for me to assume the voice of the chaplain, which was a high-pitched, rather a monotonous, and certainly a distinctive tone. Then I hurried. Had I had my make-up box from the theatre my task would have been easy, but here I had nothing except the things actually before me. However, if your hair is light and you want to make it dark, you can make some sort of a show with ink. It is not a

commodity whose use I recommend for ordinary social purposes, but in the ill-light of a military prison it might pass. Very quickly I took the bottle of ink with which I had been so kindly provided by the Governor, and daubed it on my hair. I searched the chaplain's pockets and found there one of the small steel mirrors which most soldiers used to carry. The effect was quite passable—certainly enough to deceive an unsuspicious observer.

My crucial question was the moustache. Crepe hair costs about sixpence a yard and spirit gum costs twopence a bottle. An inch of crepe hair and a spot of gum might mean life and death to me. Yet these—of an instrinic value of about a farthing—were the very things which I had not got. Therefore I must find substitutes. Now it was more important that my moustache should be above suspicion than my hair, since the hair would be largely covered by the military cap. Hurriedly, therefore, I searched the chaplain's pockets again —I should have said that in the meantime the sentry had passed once more: I could only do one job in each ten minutes interval. I wanted a knife, for my own had naturally been taken away from me. To my joy I discovered something better. The chaplain was an officer very correctly turned out, and in his waistcoat pocket was a minute pair of toilet scissors. I cut off a small lock of his own hair for although he wore it short in correct military fashion, he had a forelock of considerable length. Here, then, was my moustache.

How to fix it? How to fix it so that it would stay on just for three or four minutes while I got out of the prison? Well, I had no spirit gum, but I had envelopes—and on the back of envelopes is gum. My fingers, once so experienced with this kind of thing, cut the hair into suitable lengths; then I licked a dozen envelopes so that the gum was loose, then rubbed them on to my upper lip. I put the hair in position. Would it stay on? I moved about, jerked my head from side to side. A few hairs fell out, but most of it held. I looked again in the mirror. Yes, the effect was quite passable. I felt a great excitement and a dawning confidence. There remained only the difference of height, and that the greatcoat would help to disguise, for I could affect a stoop within the greatcoat which would be immediately detected were there no coat to hide it.

I had a few minutes left. Hastily I scribbled a note apologising to the chaplain for my churlish behaviour and collected all my own papers. I arranged him finally with care and precison, his back to the door, his head in his hands, so placed that the colour of his hair could not possibly be seen

His face fell sharply on to the table before him; he made no further movement. . . . Very hurriedly I stripped the chaplain's greatcoat from him and donned it myself.

through the little window. As the sentry approached the door I rose, donned the chaplain's cap and patted the unconscious man on the shoulder, calling to him in his own distinctive voice some final consolation. Then I strode towards the door which the sentry unlocked. He gazed curiously at the recumbent form.

"Leave him there," I said in the chaplain's voice. "He is rather overcome, but he is now prepared to meet his God. He will meet his fate bravely."

Quite unsuspicious, the sentry locked the door after me and escorted me down the corridor to the office of the Governor. I did not enter the office, which was well-lighted, but suggested that I wished to regain my billet immediately. I reported that I had left the prisoner well prepared, and that he still had one or two more letters to write which doubtless the Governor would forward to their destinations. As I made to move off he thanked me; then to my consternation he said, "Well, I'll just go and have one final look at him and see if I can persuade him to lie down. He's a brave man and I know he would like to meet his death bravely; but a man who has been pacing about all night often appears nervous. I'll just go along and have a final word with him."

This was rather disconcerting. I had estimated that it might be an hour at least before my trick was discovered. Still, it only made action all the more urgent. I said good-night, saluted stiffly, and one of his men took me to the gate of the prison. Happy moment! I stood there under the starry sky and the hunter's moon. Free again! the impossible had been accomplished! I had escaped! How long would my freedom last? Even now the Governor was walking towards my cell. Within five minutes, perhaps, the alarm would be raised.

In my extremity I thought, as I had thought before, immediately of Suzanne. It was strange, I commented to myself as I hurried down the almost deserted street. Here was a girl I had only known for three or four days, and yet willingly I would place my life in her hands. It is fortunate that there are people like that in the world. I scarcely stopped to think of the risk that I was bringing upon her, because I knew very well that that was the last thing she would wish me to consider. Her house was but a few hundred yards from the prison. I did not knock at the door, but at her bedroom window. Was she asleep? I doubt it, for in a few seconds she was at the window, calling in a whisper to me. And strangely enough she did not ask who was there: it was as if she were expecting me.

She opened the door and, as I entered, flung her arms

about me. She had heard, as had the whole town, that the terrible collision had been engineered by a British officer disguised as a German. She had heard, too, that I was to be shot at dawn. It was a moment for tears, yet she was far too practical for that—in fact, I have never known a woman with such an instantaneous grip of the situation. In two sentences I whispered to her what had happened. My present problem needed no explanation. It was fortunate in one way that we were alone in the house; her father was as usual on night duty, and her mother (who was, as I have previously mentioned, I think, an invalid) had been taken to hospital two days before.

First to dispose of the chaplain's wardrobe which I had borrowed so effectively. In a thriller the hero would have dissolved it in acid, or something ingenious like that, but I had no acid—and no time. Further, there was one obvious method of destoying the clothes which would not be mentioned in an ordinary work of fiction. Yet many hundreds of thousands of men who served during the war in Flanders will remember those antique and insanitary lavatories which were the sole form of sanitation in most of the country towns in this region. They were mere sumps which were cleared out periodically by a municipal machine which looked like a Shell-Mex lorry with a giant vacuum cleaner tube attached to it. If you had a nose, it was unnecessary to see the lorry to know that the work was being performed. In a moment, therefore, I had stripped off the chaplain's greatcoat, his cap and his glasses, and had stuffed them through the lavatory seat. To remove the moustache was the work of a second—it was precarious enough already. My hair I left as it was. There was no time to wash it with the thoroughness which would be necessary if my head was not to be completely piebald.

All this took but a few minutes, yet we were not too soon. We heard a small commotion at the end of the street, and to our dismay found that it was caused by a patrol of German soldiers. Suzanne opened the door an inch or so, and reported that they were obviously going to make a systematic search of the street. She heard one man calling out: "I tell you I saw him come down here." Yes, once again urgent action was necessary.

It was Suzanne who saved the situation. Maybe all my inventive ideas had been used up in my escape. Maybe the sensation of achieving freedom had damped my thinking capacity. I stood and I trembled—I must frankly admit had it not been for Suzanne I might have given up the attempt.

But she hurriedly took me into her bedroom. We had not shown a light in the house. There had been no one about as I had entered, and if the Germans were going to search the whole street there was no reason why they should suspect this house any more than any other.

"Get undressed quickly," she commanded, "and get into bed—with me."

"But what's the idea?" I began.

"Leave it to me," she said. "Get undressed."

I did. I flung off my clothes and dumped them on the ground. I was still, of course, wearing the German uniform in which I had been arrested. Then, clad in my shirt, I climbed into bed beside Suzanne. What a strange situation! I had never been what is usually known as a man of the world; this was the first time I had ever shared a bed with a woman, and under what circumstances! Yet I felt no thrill of sex as the warm body of Suzanne pressed close by my side—for the bed was narrow. We could hear those soldiers in the street; in another minute or two our ordeal would have begun. I could feel Suzanne wriggling about beside me.

"You've got the idea, of course?" she whispered. "You are a German soldier on the bust—I'm a prostitute. Play up to that. Let me do as much of the talking as possible. You can be half-tight."

I was only too content to leave it to her, for I had the utmost confidence in her mental agility. The investigating patrol wasted no preliminaries. They did not knock at the door, but burst it open; almost before we realised that they were in the house they were in our room. I played my part. I sat up in bed blinking and looking about me stupidly, as a man who has just wakened from the heavy stupor of a love sleep.

But Suzanne went for them tooth and nail. How dare they come into a lady's room, she stormed. Her voice had lost its softer tone, and she had assumed the hard shriek of the professional girl. Then I took up the story.

"Yes! Bloody fine pals you are!" I complained sleepily. "Can't a chap have a bit of skirt without other people coming barging in in the middle of the night? Go away. I've hired the girl for the night and I'm going to have her!"

The two men stared, yet their astonishment was nothing to that which was to follow a second later when Suzanne got out of bed. Now that mysterious wriggling revealed itself—she had been slipping out of her nightdress and stood naked before them, the complete prostitute, brazen and unashamed.

"You go away," she wheedled in the pigeon German

which all the professional girls behind the German line naturally learned. "You go away. Me engaged for to-night. You come again to-morrow."

The two men stared at her youthful body, well-built and pleasantly rounded. They saw also the invitation in her eyes. Their own were literally staring out of their heads. They were not used to receptions of this kind. But one of them made up his mind very quickly.

"Yes, mademoiselle," he agreed. "We come again to-morrow. To-morrow night, eh?"

"Yes, to-morrow night," called Suzanne after them. "Five francs for a whole night, two francs for one hour, eh?"

We heard the broken door slam behind them as they proceeded to the next house. Never were soldiers so convinced as these two. The patrol moved farther down the street. Immediate danger was over. I sat on the edge of the bed, an incongruous figure in my rough army shirt. Then, as Suzanne turned to me, I put my arms around her warm body and kissed her. She clung to me and I kissed her again, and I meant every word I said when I told her that there was no other girl in the world like her.

I would have left her. She had risked enough for me already, but she would not hear of my going. She argued truthfully that the streets of Lens would be ablaze with patrols—that it would be impossible to miss them, and that every man abroad on the streets that night would be under suspicion. She insisted that I should remain with her throughout the whole of the following day. So I spent the rest of the night washing ink from my hair. It was not entirely satisfactory, so in the morning, while I hid in the attic, Suzanne went to a chemists' and bought a hair dye which turned me into a medium blonde.

I remained in the attic throughout the day. Nothing happened. Although there were reports of great police activity, our street was not further troubled. Apparently a cordon had been drawn about Lens during the night, which might make my escape all the more difficult, for I was determined that come what may I would leave Suzanne's house that night. If I were discovered it would mean death to her as well as to me.

Yet before I left there was a further scene to be played. Soon after nightfall a soldier knocked at the door and entered without invitation. He was one of the patrol who had visited us the previous evening. He had now come to take advantage of Suzanne's invitation. She put him off cleverly, but it was agony for me, who saw the scene through a crack in the door

which led to the attic stairs. Half a dozen times I was tempted to come out and strangle the sensuous brute and dump him where I had dumped the chaplain's overcoat ; but, there again, that would have been more chivalrous than wise. He didn't like it a bit when Suzanne put him off by telling him that she had already engaged herself for the night to a sergeant. He wanted to know why he couldn't have two francs worth before the sergeant came. She naturally wouldn't hear of it. Nevertheless, in her character of a prostitute she could not object when the man kissed her and pawed her about in a disgusting fashion. My blood boiled as I saw his clumsy fingers feeling her rounded breasts and straying sensuously over her body. Never did a good girl play a braver part, and never did that man realise how near he was to sudden death when finally still grumbling at the bloody sergeant who always picked out the best girls, he decided that he had better retire before the sergeant arrived.

She rushed to me as soon as he had gone. I held her in my arms in that dark and miserable attic while she sobbed out her heart ; but such was her spirit that she soon pulled herself together, and it was she who wiped the perspiration from my brow, for I believe that my ordeal of watching and restraining myself had been almost as great as hers. Then we planned the final details of my escape. Her father had slept in the house throughout the day but had known nothing of my presence—we had considered it just as well that no unnecessary person should be involved. It was the sight of him unknown to himself—that had given me an idea. Surely a railwayman could walk about with greater freedom than most others. So Suzanne picked out some old working clothes of her father's. At nightfall she went to the woman of the *estaminet* who had first sent me to her, and demanded the loan of one of the *laissez-passer* which the Germans insisted that all civilians behind their lines should possess. Thus disguised and armed, I was well prepared to take my chance. Actually, my most terrifying moment was my parting with Suzanne. She tried to make me promise to enter into no more adventures. I, for my part, endeavoured to persuade her to come with me ; but she would not leave her father and particularly her mother, so naturally I did not insist. Then I kissed her for the last time and strode confidently down the streets of Lens.

At the *octroi* I was halted by a military patrol, but my papers were passed without hesitation and two hours later I had reached that open space near Bois-Bernard where Palmer would pick me up. But would he ? Was he still keeping the rendezvous night by night ? I waited until the

agreed hour, one o'clock in the morning. Yes, high up above there was an aeroplane ; whether it was German or English I could not tell. I made no attempt to signal, for it was too high above. Lower and lower it came, and I knew that Palmer had not deserted me. I lit an automatic cigarette lighter which Suzanne had bought for me—for my torch had naturally been taken away in the prison—and five minutes later the aeroplane had come to rest in the green field. Twenty seconds after that I was inside it, and immediately we took to the air again, rising high in our flight over the line. Thus I came home.

AN INTRICATE AFFAIR

By

CHARLES LUCIETO

THE real head of the German Secret Service at Geneva, whose principal duty was to recruit spies and traitors and to send them into France, was a fellow named Koeniger, who lived on the rue Prévost-Martin.

He was not only in touch with Irma Staub, but also with the famous Miss Doktor, who directed (and how well she did it !) the espionage headquarters that the Boches had set up in Antwerp.

However, if Koeniger was in charge of things at Geneva, it was only in appearance. He got his orders from the Main Information Bureau of the German Army, located at Freiburg in Brisgau. Their representative at Geneva was a woman whose name we could never discover, whom we nicknamed "La Rouquine."

No one will ever know what great damage she did to France and to the Allies. Even Irma Staub was a gentle angel compared to La Rouquine. She stopped at nothing—not even murder—to accomplish what she had set her mind on. If I may use a slang phrase which describes her methods of procedure very exactly, she treated 'em rough. She didn't bother with skill and trickery, she relied entirely upon brute force. Her gang did not do things by halves. A man who was pointed out to them as a suspicious character was as good as dead !

La Rouquine had two assistants, Koeniger, just mentioned, and Lisenmenber. Her gang, her men, as she called them, were all French deserters. Among the most important of them were : Michel Cayer, Barrio, Murat, Perrin, Vignon—his assistant in crime was an Austrian anarchist named Weill—Forestier, Franciscoud, Forest, Mourier, alias Campion and Chapeyron, and, finally, Guaspare, one of the most dangerous bandits that I have ever had occasion to see.

Two Frenchwomen completed the gang—Anne Garnier and Yvonne Schadeck.

Perhaps some day I will tell the story of how and where these bandits fell into our hands. . . .*

For the moment suffice it to say that none of their schemes to harm their native land escaped our knowledge. One of our agents—he was certainly a hero—succeeded in living among these spies and traitors. They met at the Café Amodru, which was run by a man named Chavanne with the assistance of two brothers from Marseilles, Jean and Marius Ripert, better known by the name of Loupart.

But to continue, when I examined the documents that Kohr gave Irma Staub, I not only found out new things about the band that I have just described, but also about another one connected with it and just being organised. Its director, who had already been appointed, was none other than Julius, alias James, Meyer, sixty years old and born at Frankfort-am-Main, a member of the famous Lourrach band.

This fellow Julius claimed to be a naturalised American, and had often been pointed out to us. He travelled about France a great deal, going especially to Langres, Vesoul, Lyon, Dijon, Nantes, Saint-Nazaire, Lorient, and Brest.

The document in question stated that James Meyer, who already had his orders, would a few days later meet two French deserters near Saint-Julien-en-Genevois. These men would try to cross the border between there and Bellegarde. Meyer would swear them into the service and would then give them the details of a commission which they were to perform near Lyon.

Pinned to the document were photographs of the two deserters. Strangely enough, these photographs came from the office in Berlin, where they keep the Bertillon measurements of people of various sorts, as was proved by a slip that accompanied them.

Immediately we were faced by the question : " As these two deserters are Frenchmen, how does it happen that the German Information Bureau has their photographs ? "

The answer, you must admit, was not obvious. Especially as in such matters conjecture is of no value : one must have definite proof. You can't imprison men merely because

* The list of names given above, which is far from complete, will perhaps convince the German papers that defied me to give the names of the directors of their Secret Service in Switzerland that they were not wise to do so. If I have omitted some of them, they may be assured that I did so willingly. As to Irma Staub, for instance, I know perfectly well that that is merely one of the famous spy's pseudonyms. Shall I be more precise, and mention the fact that she is titled, that her name begins with an H and ends with an R ?

you suspect that they are guilty. You have to establish their guilt beyond question.

In this case, if the presumption of their guilt were disregarded, we would have absolutely nothing against them. Of course, the mere fact that these two Frenchmen were deserters made them objects of suspicion; but there is a distinction between being a deserter and a traitor.

I decided to clear the thing up and left at once for Paris to look up the records of the two deserters. From the outset I had a feeling that the information on the slip that had been sent on from Berlin was inaccurate.

Not only could I find no trace of the desertion of men by the names of Vernier and Gastrat, the names given on the slip, but the regiments to which they were supposed to have belonged had never reported their disappearance. Who could these two men be?

I could not solve the problem as long as the information from which I was working was inaccurate, so I decided to watch the border at the point where they were going to try to get across into Switzerland.

I warned the different branches of the service which had charge of keeping suspicious people from entering our country, and then I left for Bellegarde, from which point I "sent out feelers" in all directions. Four days later some French customs men, who were making their rounds along the border at night, arrested Vernier and Gastrat as they were about to cross into Switzerland.

They were brought to me under heavy escort. In vain did I attempt to question them.

My questions were met by the most complete silence. There was nothing I could do but have them put in prison. It was done at once. But I could not let it go at that, so I took what steps were necessary.

. . . .

As the continued silence of the two deserters could not be convincingly explained, it occurred to me that Vernier and Gastrat, granted that those were their names, might easily be German agents who were trying to get across the border after a mission in France.

If they had really been Frenchmen, even French deserters, it is inconceivable that they should not have attempted to justify themselves in some way. They would probably have attempted to arouse our pity by expressing their regret at having been led to commit such a crime. But nothing of the sort had happened.

I talked he matter over with my colleagues at Bellegarde

and decided to send the two men back to Paris where, if worse came to worst, some way would certainly be found to make them talk. That evening they left for Paris, heavily escorted, and I later heard that they really were German agents. Their true names were Holzmann (Vernier) and Junker (Gastrat).

The court-martial made short work of them. . . .

With them out of the way, I now had to turn my attention to James Meyer, who, you remember, had arranged to meet the two spies. When they did not arrive, he might get suspicious and disappear.

But that was not necessarily true! It seemed even less likely when a further examination of the documents found on Irma Staub seemed to point to the fact that James Meyer was to have commissioned Vernier and Gastrat to blow up a factory at Lyons.

I decided to go to the place where James Meyer had agreed to meet the two spies, and I wanted one of my colleagues to go with me. The man I had in mind seemed to have been made to order for such business, and I had the utmost confidence in him. He spoke German perfectly, had an extraordinary amount of intelligence, and was an expert in hand-to-hand fighting. When I told him how things stood he accepted my proposition enthusiastically.

As it had been necessary to give Meyer photographs of the pseudo-deserters, we inferred that he did not know them by sight. Thus, as we were of about the same build as Vernier and Gastrat, and as the meeting was to be at night, it was likely that Meyer would not recognise the substitution and would fall into our trap.

My colleague and I spent the day studying the photographs, and that evening we disguised ourselves so well that it would have been impossible for a man not previously warned to detect the substitution.

The meeting was to take place at a blind tiger, well-known along the border, where the smugglers in that district congregated. This joint had the great advantage of having two doors. One of them in France, and the other in Switzerland. The border—or, rather, the imaginary line that represented it—ran through the middle of the room inside.

Perhaps that feature did not seem attractive to the smugglers!

Moreover, the café was run by a fellow named Borgone, a ferocious and bloodthirsty brute whose fights with the customs officials were famous.

Borgone had the reputation of being very pro-German.

Moreover, he was supposed to be in the pay of La Rouquine, whose agents constantly frequented his place. It was consequently quite risky to go into his saloon, as there was always a chance that one might be recognised. For that reason we were armed to the teeth when we started out.

Just to get ourselves established as the people we were supposed to be, we organised a little byplay that we thought ought to gain us the immediate sympathy of the customers in the Café Borgone. Chased by policemen and customs officials and, to all appearances, panic-stricken, we rushed into Borgone's, having first broken-in the door a little. That last action, as you can imagine, made him furious.

As soon as he saw that we were standing safely at the bar, which was in Switzerland, although the tables and benches in front of it were in France, Borgone walked up to our pursuers and asked them in a rough tone of voice what they wanted. They explained to him that we were deserters, and perhaps German spies. Then one of the policemen, a sergeant, asked him to put us out so that they could arrest us.

Borgone burst out into mocking laughter and answered :

"Why, they aren't in France any more! They're in Switzerland. And, besides that, it's not up to me to help you! If you're going to wait until I put them out, you have a long wait coming!"

Then he turned to us.

"Well, boys! Do you want to go back to France?"

"Not on your life!" we cried together.

He became more derisive than ever.

"There, you see! They seem to have taken a liking to this country of liberty, justice, and law! At any rate, if they don't want to go back, I'm not the one to force them to! To the contrary!"

The policemen and customs officials went out, saying that they would make their report.

"That's right!" he called to them. "And above all don't forget to send me a copy of it. I'll frame it!"

When that was over Borgone walked up to us and, after looking us over, he asked ;

"What did those policemen want?"

"Hell!" I answered. "We're deserters, and, you know . . ."

"Where have you come from?"

"From the trenches in the Vosges!"

"What regiment?"

"The colonial artillery!"

"What section?"

"243."

He took a dirty note-book out of the pocket of his blue apron and looked at it. Then he said:

"That checks! What can I do for you?"

I looked slyly around the room; then I remarked:

"There are too many people around to tell you here. Haven't you some room where we can talk without being overheard?"

He gave me a long look, then he said:

"Well, I guess it's all right. Aren't you supposed to meet somebody at my place?"

"Yes."

"What are the initials of the person you expect to meet?"

"J.M."

"That's right!"

Then he stuck out his hand, saying:

"I see that you belong to the brotherhood! The person you are waiting for isn't here yet, but he won't be long. Go into this room. As soon as he comes I'll tell you."

As he opened the door, he added:

"Order what you want, and make yourselves at home. No one will bother you here!"

Then as we settled down he went out.

We were in a den of the German spies. It was now up to us to get out—and to get out with what we had come for. . . .

. . . .

A few moments later Borgone sent a man to tell us that the person we were waiting for had arrived. He asked us to meet him outside, as there were some suspicious-looking people in the room and he didn't want them to see him.

We went out at once, and in the court outside we found James Meyer, whom I had known for a long time, talking intently to Borgone.

When he saw us, Meyer came towards us, taking out of his pocket a set of Bertillon measurements such as we had stolen from Irma Staub. He checked them over, and then compared us with the photographs he had. Then, turning towards Borgone, he said:

"They are the ones all right!"

He shook hands with him, saying:

"Thanks! Once again you have done us a great service, my dear Borgone."

Without meaning to, James Meyer had just confirmed our

suspicion that Borgone was on the German payroll, and that what had just happened was not a mere matter of chance. That information was of importance.

Then James Meyer turned to us and in German ordered us to follow him without saying anything. We walked on over impossible roads until we finally got to what looked like an abandoned house.

James Meyer took an electric torch out of his pocket and made certain signals with it, from time to time whistling in a strange way.

The door opened quietly and a voice from within said .

" *Kommen sie !* " (" Come in ! ")

We did not know the ground and had to grope our way through the dark. This seemed to annoy the man who was waiting for us, for he said in a domineering tone :

" *Schnell !* " (" Hurry up ! ")

We were in a large court in front of the house which seemed to be cluttered up with packing boxes, casks, and bales of goods. Our guide shut the door carefully, then he turned around and said :

" Here we are at home ! Follow me. But be sure you walk right behind me without going an inch to either side, because we have pitfalls all around."

We followed him silently, admiring as we went the elaborate defences with which this mysterious man had surrounded himself.

Soon we were at the door to the house, where we were met by a bulldog growling menacingly.

" Be quiet, Merkur," commanded his master. " You know perfectly well that these are friends ! "

The dog shut up at once. It must have been well trained, for it went straight back to its house.

When we entered the house, the first things to strike our eyes were our own photographs on two large envelopes on which our names were printed in gothic capital letters. These were lying on the table.

The man waved us to our chairs, and sat down at the table. He examined " our " envelopes for some time, then he said to James Meyer :

" Have you told them about it ? "

" No, lieutenant-colonel, we were told to let you take charge of the whole thing." " Good ! "

The officer seemed to be completely at his ease. He leaned towards us and said :

" Although you have never worked under me in this division, you probably know that the things we do here are

of far greater importance than the kind of thing you have been doing under Miss Doktor."

We nodded, without saying anything.

"This," he continued, "is real war. It is a fight to the bitter end! I say that to let you know that the job that I am going to entrust to you has got to be accomplished, whatever the cost! You must stop at nothing. This is a question of life and death for Germany!"

He looked us in the eyes, then asked:

"Are you going on with it?"

In keeping with the parts we were playing, I answered without a moment's hesitation:

"I'll do it as long as there's breath left in my body, and the same with my friend!"

"Fine!"

For a moment he thought, then he continued:

"I understand that as a result of what you have already accomplished, Miss Doktor thinks highly of you." (Then, it seemed, we were "stars"!) "She tells me that I can count on you absolutely. That encourages me to ask you to exert yourselves to the fullest. If these operations have the results upon which I am counting, you will have done a great service for your country."

As he said this, the officer had been taking a large map out of a pile of papers in front of him.

"Come over here!" he ordered.

When we had obeyed, he continued:

"You see this map? It shows the hydro-electric system that the French have built in the Alps and in South-eastern France. You will notice that under certain names there are, in parentheses, the letters: (D), (G), (E.ch.), and (E.m.). Their meanings are as follows:

"D.—Distributing centre.

"G.—Generating plant.

"E.ch.—Electro-chemical plant.

"E.m.—Electro-metallurgic plant.

"In short, what you have before your eyes is a map of all the factories in France that are producing materials for carrying on the war. They are so far from the front, and have, up to the present time, been so carefully guarded, that they have been impregnable. This group of factories constitutes the only arsenal in France. From it are sent out in ever-increasing numbers the guns and munitions that, on the front, consistently halt even our most carefully prepared offensives.

"That must stop! Just as we have destroyed the industrial

centres in the north and the east of France, so we must also destroy them in the Alps and the south-east of France! Such, gentlemen, is the mission that I am going to entrust to you."

Looking us straight in the eye, he asked:

"Do you accept it?"

I pretended to think for a moment, and seemed to have a short consultation with my comrade, then I answered:

"Why not? Granted that all the technical details are arranged, only one thing more remains to be settled."

"What?"

"Why, the most important one, as far as we are concerned! The question of money! How much will you give us if we are successful?"

The lieutenant-colonel smiled.

"If it is only a matter of money that is bothering you, I can assure you that there will be no trouble about that."

"But still . . ."

"Listen to me," he said in a peremptory tone. Emphasising each word, he said:

"My superiors have empowered me to offer you a hundred thousand marks for each factory in which you stop production, no matter what your means of doing so."

"That's fine! And . . . when do we start work?"

"As soon as possible. It will become more dangerous all the time!"

"Good! I don't know anything to keep us from starting at once. Will you tell me just what your plans are?"

"I like a man who makes up his mind that way," he remarked. "It shows that you are a man of action, which, judged by what you have done in the past, is not surprising." (What, I wondered, had I done in the past!) "Now listen to me!"

He took out of the portfolio before him more maps, a few notes, and a book—or, rather, a pamphlet—entitled *Water Power in France*.

"This book," he began, "is an absolute miracle. Not only does it contain a complete list of the French factories that are manufacturing munitions, but it is filled with confidential information about these factories and their methods of production.

"The French will never guess how helpful they were when they brought out this book. With their usual levity, they have given us a weapon that we should be silly not to use, and they have done it merely to parade their strength and their wealth. Thus they have saved us a long and costly

investigation, one that could never have been complete and that might have done more harm than good.

"Look, for instance, at this page about one of their most important factories. You will notice that it leaves out nothing. Even the names of the Board of Directors are there. That, however, we can afford to laugh at. Such information is of no possible use to you.

"But some of the information I am far from laughing at. I am intensely interested, for instance, to know what that factory produces. Now I know. There it is, written out in full."

Passing the book over to me, he continued :

"Some of the things there are even more useful than that. You can rely on their accuracy. For they all come from French sources. The figures as to production, and all the other information in the book, may be considered official, because they are French. You must agree with me that it is a pleasure to work under such conditions ! "

I was astounded ! How had it happened that we French had been foolish enough to furnish such information to our implacable opponents !

I studied carefully the book he had just given me. The further I read, the better I realised that, as the lieutenant-colonel had said, everything was there—a history of the business, its capital, the dividends it paid, its equipment, its capacity, etc. With such information the Boches couldn't go wrong ! And what could we do to make this information useless ? As I was thinking about how that might be done, the lieutenant-colonel went on :

"This booklet is perfect, but we have something even better. Here we have a detailed description of every machine in each one of those factories. We even have photographs of the machines. Here, for example, is the latest style of generator. It comes straight from the famous M—— factory at Leeds, as may be seen from the manufacturer's trademark. Under the tank you can read the sign, 'Danger, keep off.'

"You can be sure that if there is any danger about it, it is for the French, not for us."

Then the lieutenant-colonel set out to tell us just how to destroy these factories and their contents. He advocated a variety of methods. Thus I learned, to my astonishment, that nothing could be easier than to put hundreds of factories out of commission by the simple expedient of destroying the station or sub-station from which they got their power. It appeared that that was the aim of most of the schemes of the lieutenant-colonel and his accomplices.

When he had explained his plan, he said :

"Now that we have agreed on the necessity of immediate action, I have only left to tell you on which places we want you to concentrate your endeavours."

Taking a carefully folded paper out of his pocket-book, he looked it over, and then went on :

"For your actions to have the quickest effect, the following factories should be destroyed :

"The steel mills and foundries at Firminy.

"The steel mills and foundries at Saut-du-Tarn.

"The power and light station at Haute-Maurienne.

"The electric station at Millery.

"The factory at Crans.

"The machine shops of Rhone.

"When you are through with these places, and, I repeat, the sooner the better, we will get together again and see about continuing the work."

"Then all we have to do is to decide about the explosives," I said.

"I was just going to speak of that," he answered. "The explosives that you use must be as small in bulk as possible so that you will have no trouble getting them across the border. For that reason I asked one of my friends who specialises in such things to be good enough to prepare you some bombs that would be easy to handle and that would be charged with an exceptionally powerful explosive. I told him that they should not weigh more than 150 to 200 grammes. He has just sent me several such bombs. M. James Meyer, who is your immediate superior, will give them to you when the time comes, and he will tell you how to handle them.

"For the moment I shall merely say that the bombs are put up in metal boxes that look on the outside like tins of jam. The only way to explode them is by means of a fulminate cap, which you will not put in place until just before you are ready to use it."

He got up from his chair, saying :

"Now that this is settled, gentlemen, I must wish you good luck and hope that you will soon be with us again! When do you think you will start?"

"Why, as soon as M. James Meyer has finished off the instructions that you have just given us. I doubt whether that will take long."

"Good!"

Shaking hands, he said :

"Please excuse me, but as I am needed somewhere else,

I find myself obliged to leave you. Again, good luck!"

He turned to James Meyer, saying:

"May I have a word with you?"

They went into a corner, where they talked in low voices for a few moments, looking up at us frequently.

When their conversation was over, the lieutenant-colonel lifted up a curtain that concealed a door and left, waving a last good-bye to us.

My companion looked questioningly at me. I whispered to him:

"All ready?"

"Let's go!"

With great care James Meyer closed the door through which the lieutenant-colonel had made his exit. When he turned towards us we literally jumped on him, and after a fierce struggle succeeded in overpowering him. We then gagged and tied him up.

That done, I paid no attention to the furious looks that he gave me.

"Well, my boy," I said, "you're ours now!"

. . . .

Turning to my companion, I said:

"Will you go to the police station at Carouge and, in the name of M. N——, head of the Swiss Military Police, ask the officer in charge to meet us here? Before you do that, please call M. N—— for me and ask him to come here as soon as possible."

"Ought I to tell him what is happening?"

"Surely! You can even say that I'm alone here and don't know anything about this house, which is the lair of a pack of German spies, and that consequently, if help doesn't come in time, the Boches may come back and attend to me!"

He was already starting when I warned him:

"Watch where you step! Remember that besides the dogs there are the pitfalls. Take care!"

My colleague opened the door with infinite care and looked about the court for a long time. When his eyes had become accustomed to the dark, he plunged into the night. . . .

I came back to James Meyer, who was lying on the ground like a glass that had been tipped over. He was trying vainly to slip his bonds.

"Keep on trying," I told him laughingly. "An old sailor taught me to make those knots. That's no mean recommendation, you know! You can't ever work loose knots like that!"

James Meyer soon convinced himself of the uselessness of such efforts, and he lay still.

"I know," I went on, "that as I am in Swiss territory I have no legal right to question you. The others will take care of that! However, if you think it worth while to take me into your confidence, I am at your service! No? You don't want to? That's too bad. I thought I might be able to intercede in your favour with the Swiss police. . . ."

I saw that this got no rise out of him, so I went up to the table and, without losing sight of him, I began to go through the various portfolios that I found there. Two of them concerned France. The contents of eight of the others were entirely taken up with the Swiss Army.

Some of the documents were of the greatest importance, among which were a map of the border and a whole series of notes concerning the Swiss military defences.

I was in the midst of examining them when a bell suddenly rang in the next room. It was doubtless the telephone.

Pulling my revolver out of my pocket, I said to James Meyer:

"Well, old man, you're going to get up and go ahead of me. I warn you, if you stumble, I'll put a bullet in your head."

I untied the bonds that held his legs, and ordered:

"Go ahead!"

He obeyed at once and preceded me into the room where the telephone was ringing steadily.

I picked the instrument up hurriedly and took off the receiver, standing so that James Meyer was always in sight.

"Hallo," I said. "Who is it?"

"A. F. 321! To whom have I the pleasure of speaking?"

"James Meyer."

"Well, that's strange! I didn't recognise your voice!"

I smiled.

"Oh, you know, that's not surprising. These Swiss instruments are terrible!"

"Aren't they? Is the lieutenant-colonel there?"

"No! But he'll be back soon. Can I take any message for him?"

The person at the telephone—a woman it was—seemed to hesitate for a moment, then she answered:

"No, I don't see any reason why you shouldn't. Will you tell him that Irma Staub called up to report that the two men whom he was expecting, who should have been there by now, were arrested at Saint-Julien-en-Genevois by the customs officials."

"Well, well! That's annoying! They were the two men who went by the names of Vernier and Gastrat?"

"Yes, they are the ones!"

"You know no details?"

"None at all!"

"That's all you have to tell the lieutenant-colonel?"

"Isn't that enough?"

"Yes, but there might be something else you wanted to say. No? Well, good-night, madame."

Then I hung up the receiver. . . .

As you see, my colleague and I had had a close escape! If Irma Staub's message had reached the lieutenant-colonel two hours before, we should have had no warning and would have walked right into a trap!

Our profession is full of such risks. . . .

Thus, without another thought about what might have happened, I took my prisoner back into the other room. During the conversation he had been making the most ferocious faces at me.

We had scarcely got back when the dog started to bark. He seemed to be raging mad, which reassured me somewhat. If there was some one in the court, it must be a friend. The dog would have recognised one of the Boches, and would not have set up such a racket.

Suddenly there was the crack of a pistol outside! The dog let out a plaintive howl and was silent. He seemed to have got his deserts! A few seconds later some one knocked at the door.

Still playing my part, I answered with a rough:

"*Werda?*"

"Friends!" answered a voice that I recognised as that of my companion. "Open the door! I am bringing reinforcements!"

I opened the door at once and had the pleasure of seeing a dozen Swiss policemen and an officer come in with my comrade.

The officer looked around inquisitively. Catching sight of the prisoner, he laughed.

"Ha, ha! There's the bird!"

He walked over to him and said:

"You scoundrel! I guess you would have had some trouble getting away! You have so much string around you, you look as if you belonged in a Punch and Judy show!"

Pointing to the table, I remarked:

"Take a look at these, lieutenant!"

When he had examined the portfolios he turned pale, and, visibly shaken, stretched out his hand towards me.

"I thank you," he said, "for what you have just done for my country!"

He thought for a moment, and then continued:

"I owe my knowledge of the truth to you. Until this moment I was pro-German! Stubbornly, I believed everything the pro-German press said. Now I know!"

He turned to his men and said:

"Take this thing away! Put him in safe keeping so the chief can question him when he arrives.

"Here he is now," cried one of the policemen, who was standing on the door-sill. "I can hear his car."

A few moments later M. N—— entered the room, accompanied by two detectives, one of whom was J——, the "star" of the Swiss Military Police.

"What's going on here?" he asked.

He turned towards me and said:

"You, first of all! Who are you? What are you doing here?"

He hadn't recognised me with my disguise. I smiled, and took off some of my make-up.

"Who am I? Why, take a look!"

He cried out in surprise:

"Well, how extraordinary! It's unbelievable! I'll be darned, but I wouldn't have recognised you!"

After we had shaken hands, he asked once more:

"What's going on here? If you are on the job, it must be something worth looking into!"

"Judge for yourself!" I answered.

. . . .

With M. N—— and his assistants sitting around the table, I gave in detail the story of our recent activities, backing up my statements with the proof to be found in the documents taken from Irma Staub and those that we had just found in the office of the lieutenant-colonel.

Sorting out these documents, I gave them to the head of the Swiss Military Police. I explained just what they meant, and demonstrated their importance from a military point of view, the only one, for the moment, of real significance. By correlating the new evidence with that which James Nobody and I had discovered, I convinced M. N—— that it was imperative that he clean up this affair at once. He decided to ask his superiors for a free hand in doing so.

He thanked us for this new service we had done the Swiss Confederation, and then asked:

"Have you searched the house?"

I called his attention to the fact that as we were foreigners,

we had no right to do anything of the sort in Switzerland, and that at our own risk, without receiving permission from our chief, we had decided to unmask James Meyer and his accomplices.

M. N—— smiled, and added :

" I realise that you have overstepped your legal rights, but in your place I would have done the same."

Then he glanced at James Meyer who, gagged and bound, was listening intently to our conversation.

" If you are willing, we will search the house together. I am sure we shall find some interesting things here. After that we will question this fellow."

I interrupted him to say :

" Don't you think it would be wise while we are doing this part of the job to see to the arrest of Borgone and his gang ? It is quite evident that the two groups are connected."

" Yes ! You're right ! "

He called the police officer and ordered :

" Take six men and go at once to the Café Borgone. Arrest every one you find there, including the proprietor. Here is a blank warrant. You have only to write the names in, no matter how many of them there are ! "

Again I interrupted him.

" Don't you think it would be wise to do this in connection with the French police ? You remember how curiously the Café Borgone is placed, astride the border. If you bother Borgone and his friends, they have only to step across the room into France. If the French police are on one side of the border, your men on the other, no such problem can arise. They will fall either into our hands or yours, and the desired end will be accomplished.

" However, I don't think they will hesitate to let you arrest them. They know perfectly well that if they are taken into France the numerous crimes that they have committed will cost them their lives, while in Switzerland, where there is no death penalty, they will get out of it with a prison sentence."

" How shall we work it ? "

" It's easy enough ! My friend here will hurry over to Bellegarde in your auto. He will tell our colleagues there what is happening. Then when your men close in from the Swiss side, ours will surround the French part of the café."

This was decided upon.

I may say at once that my predictions came true. Caught between the two fires, Borgone and his gang decided they would rather be arrested by the Swiss police than by ours.

Our search yielded nothing that we hadn't known before. The only really interesting thing that we found was an old-fashioned wireless set in the cellar.

Besides, in the lieutenant-colonel's room we found several uniforms belonging to officers in the Swiss Army, one the uniform of a high officer. The lieutenant-colonel doubtless used this when he went to " inspect " the fortifications of the Swiss Confederation.

When we had searched the place from top to bottom, we returned to the room where we had left James Meyer. The Swiss Secret Service agent and two of his assistants then proceeded to seal up the various documents that had been found in the portfolios. It took a good hour to do it.

M. N—— then had the spy brought before him, and he was ungagged.

" I am going to question you," he began. " But before I begin, I must warn you that anything you say may be used against you. You understand me ? "

James Meyer smiled, then he answered :

" What you say is of no interest to me. I refuse to answer you ! "

" We'll find a way of making you talk ! "

" Try and do it ! "

" That's what I'm going to do ! "

After a moment's silence, he went on :

" What's your name ! "

" It's none of your business ! Moreover, you might as well know that although I was born in Germany, I am a naturalised American. You will have to answer to the American Consul for the indignities that I have suffered since my arrest. Besides, I have nothing to do with this business. As an employee of the owner of this house, I merely went to Borgone's place and brought these two men back. . . ."

He looked at us.

" If I have understood you," replied M. N——, " you admit having been in contact with Borgone and the owner of this house ? Will you then tell me the name of the latter ? "

" Not on your life ! " answered Meyer.

" Then you must have some reason for concealing it. It doesn't matter, though, for we shall soon find it out."

He turned to his detectives and ordered :

" Search this man ! "

It was soon finished.

As his pockets were emptied a more and more dangerous-looking assemblage of weapons appeared on the table. He

had everything imaginable—a revolver, a burglar's kit, sticks of dynamite, a Bickford hangman's noose, a Bowie knife, along with forged identification papers, etc. There was also a silver cigarette-case, upon which I noticed that James Meyer kept his eyes.

I picked up the case, in which a few cigarettes were left, and examined it carefully. I saw nothing unusual about it, but noticed that the spy followed all my movements with growing uneasiness.

"Tell me," I said to M. N——, "at the customs office, is there an X-ray machine, such as is used to discover what's inside suspicious-looking baggage?"

"Why, of course," he answered.

"Then, if you don't mind, I'll go up there to check up on a little matter that interests me."

"What is it?"

"I should like to know what kind of tobacco these cigarettes are made of."

Already M. N—— knew what I was driving at.

"We will go together. It will be worth while, if for no other reason than that I can introduce you to the man who takes the X-rays."

A quarter of an hour later, thanks to the X-rays, we had absolute proof of the guilt of James Meyer.

One of the cigarettes contained a little piece of paper tightly rolled and stuck in between two pinches of tobacco. This paper had on it the formula for the manufacture of an explosive which they intended to use to blow up French factories, and instructions as to how to make it. The factories to be destroyed were also named. When he was confronted with this evidence, James Meyer had to give up and admit his guilt.

A few days later the Council of War at Geneva sentenced him to six months in prison and a 5,000 francs' fine. It ordered, moreover, that he should be deported from Switzerland.

His accomplices—Borgone and his gang—were also sentenced for varying terms.

On the other hand, although we sent out thousands of copies of the lieutenant-colonel's photograph, we were never able to discover his real name.

However, the dangerous gang that he had organised was put out of business and his lair unearthed. He was never heard from again.

PASSWORD TO GLORY

By

S. T. FELSTEAD

Very few people have any conception of the work that was done by the secret agents of the Allies. Here is an amazing story of the activities of "Evelyn," Chief of an important Intelligence Service operating from Folkestone.

On the Leas at Folkestone, overlooking the Straits of Dover, there stands a house which played a momentous part in the Great War. It was one of the headquarters of the British Intelligence Service.

A grim business it was, with death forever in the offing. Women as well as men could be seen there, some to return again and again, others to disappear into the clutches of the foe across the water whose guns boomed day and night.

Only a small staff carried on the bureau, and in December, 1914, when this story opens, they were new and comparatively untrained to the unending troubles of conducting a fool-proof Intelligence system. At the head was the debonair, good-looking Captain Cecil Aylmer Cameron, an artillery officer of Scottish birth. Beyond a useful knowledge of languages and some hurried training in London, he had to learn his job, as had all the men of Kitchener's army.

Certainly he was no master spy of fiction, any more than was his second-in-command, Georges Gabain, a young officer of Belgian descent. Speed had been the essence of the contract. From September, following the evacuation of Antwerp and the complete German occupation of Belgium, the service had started in a modest way until it was now beginning to assume important dimensions.

The house itself had been "commandeered" and stripped of its domestic furniture; in place of the latter there were severely business-like desks, filing cabinets and hard chairs. An orderly stood behind the door to check all curious callers.

Cameron had discarded his name since coming to Folkestone; his *nom-de-guerre* was "Evelyn." All was "hush-hush." On this particular day he was presiding over a conference being held on the first floor, listening intently to a swarthy thick-set fellow relating what had occurred with the improvised secret service in Liège.

"Some one must be sent over immediately, monsieur," he was saying. "We cannot possibly find agents without proper authority. Maastricht (in Holland) is full of refugees, but to get a good man is out of the question without money and organisation."

All that he had to say was sound common sense. "All right," said 'Evelyn' after an hour's talk, "I'll see what can be done."

The upshot of the matter was that Gabain, who had already made his way into the occupied country and enlisted agents in Brussels, volunteered to go over to Holland and survey the situation first-hand. The two Belgians who had come from Maastricht rose with exclamations of relief, and "Evelyn," with Gabian, made preparations for re-establishing an improvised service which had come to an end with the complete occupation of Belgium.

It was a week later that Gabian found himself in the crowded little Dutch town just on the frontier, confronting one Henri Willems who had been one of the principal agents in Liege.

"Well, what happened to you?" asked Gabain of the somewhat apologetic Walloon.

Willems shrugged his shoulders with true Gallic expressiveness.

"The Germans were after me, monsieur. I escaped while there was time, that is all."

"Then what are we to do? Do you know of any one who would be willing to go over now? It is imperative that we find some one at once."

"I will see what I can do, monsieur," said Willems. "It is not easy to get a good man who is willing to face death. You had better give me a day or two while I have a look round."

Nothing else could be done for the time being. Gabain spent an interesting time in the town watching the refugees who continued to pour over the frontier until one day Willems called at his hotel with a man in the middle thirties whom he introduced by the name of Dieudonné Lambrecht. Gabain liked the look of him; he appeared honest as well as intelligent. It seems he was a manufactuer in Liége in a small way of business.

At any rate, he was not averse to the idea of becoming an agent of the secret service. As he truly said, it would probably not be long before his own business came to a standstill; in fact, the Germans had already taken possession of his factory and turned it into a motor repair shop.

Gabain gave him a day or two to turn the matter over in

his mind. The three men had a further meeting, at which Lambrecht expressed his willingness to take up the work in Liége. As Gabain pointed out, there was plenty for him to do, the first thing necessary being a well-organised railway espionage, to keep track of the thousands of troops that were pouring out of Germany to the Western Front.

The idea was that Lambrecht should take up the threads of the system that had broken down with the flight of Willems. The two men knew each other well ; it was Lambrecht's brother who had carried Willems to safety in a perilous motor car journey in the dead of night through a country swarming with German soldiers.

Willems gave him the name of some people in Liége who might be useful to him, among them one " Krull," a wealthy business man who might be able to utilise his employees as agents of the new service. But, as Willems candidly said, it would be much safer for Lambrecht to make use of his personal friends. Caution was the watchword.

Gabain went back to England, while Lambrecht crossed the frontier without much difficulty. As soon as the latter got back into Liége, he made a bee-line for an old uncle of his, Oscar Donnay, a retired railway guard. The latter had no objections to becoming a spy and without further ado Lambrecht set him to work at a post just outside the city.

. . . .

Snow was falling as Lambrecht walked down the rue de Campine in Liége. It was the Feast of St. Nicholas, the equivalent of our English Christmas, and the streets were crowded with Liégeois intent on buying what they could afford in the way of presents. German patrols clanked by and Lambrecht, keeping a wary eye on them, turned in at the cigar shop owned by his cousin Arthur Le Clercq.

" What brings you here ? " inquired the latter in great surprise.

" How would you like a concession to sell cigars and cigarettes in the German canteens ? "

Le Clercq made a face. " What will the neighbours say ? " he inquired doubtfully, "and how are you going to manage it ? "

" I've got a friend at the Kommandantur, the interpreter. he's not a bad fellow at all ; he often used to come over here from Cologne before the war."

Le Clercq was still doubtful. " What's the idea, Dieudonné ? Spying ? "

Lambrecht laughed. " I dare say you wouldn't mind doing something for your country, would you ? It doesn't matter what your neighbours say. And so long as the Ger-

mans don't catch you asking too many questions, you'll be all right. It will be killing two birds with one stone."

Madame Le Clercq joined the two men, and thus supported, Le Clercq enrolled himself in a chain of agents which Lambrecht was trying to forge.

Fruitful indeed was the time that Le Clercq spent at the German canteens. The soldiers paid little heed to him, and day after day he handed over to his cousin vastly useful information about the destination of the enemy regiments. Precautions were not particularly strong; Lambrecht with a permit the Germans had issued him some time before to conduct business in Holland, was able to take over dozens of reports which in due course found their way to Folkestone, and thence to the armies in the field.

Such a concession, as he well realised, could not continue indefinitely. But in case it suddenly broke down, he sent his wife over to Maastricht and thereby provided himself with an excuse for his frequent journeys across the frontier.

. . . .

All this was occurring at a period when the Allies were beginning to appreciate the necessity of establishing proper intelligence services in Belgium. Efforts had already been made to organise four of the big administrative departments of the country, the railwaymen, the telegraphists, the postmen, and the gendarmie. The latter, indeed, were about the first to be utilised.

Dieudonné Lambrecht was really nothing more than an individual, whose aid might lead to greater things. For the immediate present, Liége was more or less under French control, but it seemed to the people in Folkestone that he was carrying out his work pretty efficiently, and through the agent in Maastricht instructions were continually being sent to him to extend the observation over the railway lines.

This was the position then, when Lambrecht returned to Liége after one of his journeys to Holland. He took counsel with "Krull," and elicited the information that one of his employees, Garot by name, lived opposite the important Hermalle railway station.

Lambrecht went out to see him, and after appealing to the man's patriotism, induced him to keep watch. Better still, Garot's wife, as well as her father and mother who lived in the village, were also willing to do their share.

"I'll bring the reports into Liége myself," Garot added.

As Lambrecht well realised, he could do no more than organise the service himself. Within a month or two it had begun to assume formidable dimensions. Three more men

were found to watch the Liége-Brussels line; they were furnished with a model of the report which was issued to all agents so the trains could be identified. Between March and May, 1915 his agents were at work checking the trains on the Liége-Herstal, Liége-Hasselt lines, while there was also a man at Vivegnies station holding vigil day and night. Lambrecht himself took the reports into Holland, wondering how long it would be before the enemy began to suspect him.

Matters went on like this for a month or two longer. Occasionally there was friction with the agent in Maastricht who wanted to know more about the service than Dieudonné Lambrecht thought prudent; it had already dawned upon him that the fewer names he disclosed, and the less he appeared himself, the more likely he was to avoid death.

Before six months had passed his agents were at work all over the railway lines on the north of Belgium and it was at this stage that he made the acquaintance of "Evelyn," who had come over to interview the principal men himself. A big service was to be organised; henceforth, couriers would be provided and Dieudonné must remain in Liége directing operations, paying the men, and establishing a counter-espionage service.

Occasionally he paused to wonder where he was going. Liége was now a hot-bed of intrigue. There were German counter-spies in every café and hotel, even on the trams themselves. Everybody who came into the city was closely scrutinised and searched, probably followed.

It would be necessary, said "Evelyn," to have a letter-box; did Lambrecht know of some one whom he could trust with his life.

"My cousin, Arthur Le Clercq."

"Very well," said 'Evelyn,' "I leave it to you. But remember this: you must warn your cousin that it may mean death for him. He is the only person the courier will see. You are to have no association with him yourself, nor are any of your agents to know anything at all about what happens to their reports. They, in their turn, will send some one into Liége to deposit all their messages at the letter-box.

"You understand all that, don't you? You are not to be seen by the courier. He is the danger you have got to guard against morning noon and night."

Lambrecht said he thoroughly understood. The two men shook hands warmly; "Evelyn" went about his business, and Dieudonné Lambrecht returned to Liége, this time after braving an interrogation at the frontier which took all his hardihood to withstand. Courage he had in plenty; it was

that fear of the unknown, the ever-present feeling that discovery might come upon him like a thief in the night, that haunted his thoughts wherever he went.

But all seemed well in Liége. About the end of June there came further welcome recruits. A friend introduced him, by means of a photgraph, to a well-to-do man in the village of Stavelot, some little distance out of Liege—Constant Grandprez by name. Dieudonné went out to see him and found him anxious to undertake anything that would help his country. In fact, the whole Grandprez family were eager to help. The brother François, the two sisters Elise and Mary, as well as a nephew Leopold, had no objections to enlisting in the service.

All of them had already been engaged in patriotic work ; they had been aiding the escape of Russian prisoners, as well as of young Belgians who wanted to join the army. Constant Grandprez brought the local postman, old André Grégoire, into use, together with his wife, to watch the railway lines which ran through from Stavelot to Malmedy.

A wonderful old man, this postman, and so was the wife. Taking turn and turn about, they watched the lines day and night. André conducted the vigil when dark had fallen, for he had to deliver his letters during the day. Young Leopold Grandprez or one of his uncles, carried the reports to Liége. Two of the Grandprez family, Constant and Elise, were subsequently trapped by a German counter-spy, as was the postman Grégoire, and died at the Fort of La Chartreuse.

Posts were established at Jemelle, a chief guard of the railway taking on the work, while in Namur itself Lambrecht found a head agent who was willing to organise a branch service which would cover that very important region. Charles Honoré, another railway guard, assumed responsibility for the Charleroi region. Later on, he too, fell into the German net and forfeited his life.

For some months, however, everything worked smoothy enough, with the exception of minor difficulties which cropped up about obtaining the necessary funds to carry on. Repeatedly did he have to write to the agent in Maastrieht imploring him to send money. All these obstacles were comparatively trifling ; the first real trouble came when one of his men, known as "Gerard," hopelessly compromised himself and everybody in the service.

. . . .

Lambrecht had been a bit doubtful about "Gerard" from the beginning, It was a trusty agent who had introduced him, though it seemed too good to find a versatile, well-spoken young fellow who knew German as well as French and

Flemish. According to his own account, he had recently got back from Vienna ; how he had made his way into Belgium was a bit of a mystery.

Dieudonné thought him much too plausible and talkative ; it was much against his better judgment that he equipped "Gerard" with a commercial traveller's outfit and sent him out with a roving commission. However, for a time all seemed well ; "Gerard" moved about the country, sending back many reports which earned high commendation from Arnould. The agent in Maastricht.

Suddenly Lambrecht received disquieting news. An agent in Ghent sent an urgent message that he had seen "Gerard" in the company of some women known to be dangerous. Simultaneously there came a report from "Gerard" himself ; he had been sent to Ghent to ascertain whether it was true that Turkish and Bulgarian divisions were in that city pending an offensive on the Western Front. "Gerard" said the story was not true.

But by the same messenger came another letter from "Gerard" which made Lambrecht grow hot and cold with alarm.

"I have made a terrible fool of myself," the letter ran. "Some nights ago, when very drunk, I found myself in a house with four women. I do not know who they are, but I have a strong suspicion they may be German agents. Worse still, they know you are my chief. I did not mention your name at all, but during the night they asked me if I knew you. I said no, and when I left the house in the morning nothing more was said about the matter.

"But worse was to follow. On Monday morning—it was then Friday—German police arrested me in the street and on pretext of verifying my papers took me to the Kommandantur. They put me in a big chair facing the light and interrogated me for over an hour, with a camera right in front of me. Half a dozen times they took photographs of me. Eventually they let me go."

Hard on this ominous news came "Gerard" himself. Lambrecht received the tidings from "Krull," at whose house "Gerard" had presented himself, and hurried there as fast as his legs could carry him, oblivious whether the German police might be awaiting him. Nothing had happened yet ; the culprit, very contrite in appearance, and none too sober, was in a big chair, facing a battery of questions from the angry "Krull."

"So this is how you carry out your duties," Dieudonné began. "You have compromised the whole service. There

They put me in a big chair facing the light and interrogated me for over an hour, with a camera right in front of me. Half-a-dozen times they took photographs of me.

is only one thing to be done now: that is to get you out of the country without a moment's loss of time. You filthy traitorous wretch," he went on, his anger growing. "You are playing with the lives of us all. To-night, if 'Krull' will have you, sleep here. To-morrow I am sending you to Holland, where I hope they will deal with you as you deserve to be dealt with."

"Krull" promised to look after the now thoroughly repentant "Gerard" and Lambrecht, more perturbed than he cared to admit, hastened away to arrange the passage. Money had to be found, as well as the man who would take "Gerard."

Twenty-four hours saw "Gerard" out of Liége and Lambrecht breathed more freely. But to his consternation a message reached him the following morning that "Gerard" had returned. The passage he had tried was overflowing with German police.

Lambrecht had already written a letter to Arnould in Maastricht acquainting him with the disastrous turn affairs had taken.

"In the circumstances which have arisen," he said, "I have decided on an immediate suppression of the whole service. I have told 'Gerard' that I have washed my hands of the entire affair, and I have also told him that if any of us should be apprehended, he will be made responsible. You have his father's address, and I shall be glad if you will inform the latter of what has happened. I have already ordered 'Gerard' to get over the frontier as soon as possible, and to report to you."

"What has occurred is all the more unfortunate because the service was working so smoothly. The question of couriers had been worrying us a lot, but we had got over that difficulty when this trouble came to light.

"The Liége post stopped working yesterday; Jamelle will cease to-morrow, also Namur. . . . I have destroyed all secret inks, reports, and sent orders to all the posts to do likewise."

Before a reply could come back, "Gerard" turned up again. Lambrecht saw him, and threatened to kill him if he was not out of Belgium by the morning. Another "passer" was waiting for him, and Lambrecht personally saw him off with orders not to come back if he valued his life.

Was he a German counter-spy? Dieudonné thought it highly likely. For the better part of a week he went about his duties expecting arrest at any moment, but as the days went by and nothing happened, confidence returned to him. A courier took another message over to Arnould to say that

he had decided to re-start the service, taking care to introduce no one in the least doubtful.

"I shall also be glad to know," he added in his letter, "that you have been able to solve the money question. I want two months' supply; there is some one in Liége who will accommodate us if you send the necessary authority. That is the only condition on which I will re-start. I cannot possibly go on employing all my agents without giving them something."

He was all the more anxious to re-commence the work. It was now January, 1916. For over a month he had known of the German intention to attack at Verdun and had, in fact, taken the risk of crossing the frontier to warn the service in Maastricht that a gigantic battle would be fought shortly. Daily in Liége and the surrounding districts it had become more and more evident that one of the decisive engagements of the war was fast drawing near.

Garot, the agent at Hermalle, was sending through vastly important information, which Lambrecht badly wanted to reach Allied Headquarters. This brave fellow had scraped acquaintance with the German in charge of the station, inducing him, with a story of a sick relative who wanted light, to leave the big electric lamp on the station burning all night. Little did the German realise that Garot, from a window hard by, was sitting under cover of a blind taking minute particulars of all the trains.

It was evident, from the tone of Arnould's reply, that grave difficulty was being experienced with the couriers. A man known as "Little Victor" had been picking up the reports from the letter-box in Liége without hindrance for some months, but now was being looked for by the German police. The brother of this man, the dispatch carrier of a Brussels service, had fallen into enemy hands, with several of his assistants. More menacing still was the fact that with this man the Germans had captured a letter intended for Dieudonné Lambrecht. It had been marked with an "L," but had evidently been mistaken for one of the agents in Brussels with the same initials—hence its delivery to the Brussels courier.

Worse, if the Germans found "Little Victor" himself, Lambrecht was once more in danger. In the course of his visits to the letter-box in Liége, this courier had come to know who was the head of the service. Lambrecht at once issued orders that "Little Victor" should disappear, and then bestirred himself to find a new courier. To the credit of "Little Victor" it might be said that when the Germans

did capture him hiding in the woods around Moll a month later, he kept his mouth shut, despite severe ill-treatment, and betrayed no one.

Fright was now paralysing the dispatch couriers. All along the Dutch frontier horse patrols guarded the passages; even the smugglers were afraid to brave the death that hovered along the wire night and day.

And all the time Verdun loomed nearer. All passports had been taken away; there were sentries posted every twenty yards along the frontier. In desperation Lambrecht, in conjunction with a Jesuit Father, attempted to run a telephone wire across the frontier, but without tangible results. In Maastricht, Arnould, for his part, was desperately trying to enlist couriers, only to discover that it was next to impossible to get any one to take the risk. The imminence of the assault upon Verdun was now beyond all mistake; it was obvious that the Germans were straining every nerve to prevent spies of the Allies getting any news out of the country. During January only one dispatch came from Liége.

February came, with the Germans all ready. Not a bargee sailing up the Meuse, not a hairy-handed smuggler on the frontier, would carry a report. Lambrecht found a factory foreman who through some mischance possessed a permit to go to Holland. By heavily bribing the man he was enabled to get one letter through. A reply came from Arnould that he had found a smuggler who would call upon him in Liége, or at least call at the letter-box to receive any reports that might be waiting.

. . . .

Who was the smuggler? A German counter-spy? He made no appearance at the cigar shop, and Arnould could only conclude, by the absence of news from Lambrecht acknowledging his arrival, that he had failed to connect.

Unfortunately Arnould had entrusted to this man one of those cryptic letters fairly breathing espionage. In it he had asked for new posts to be established in Luxembourg, Namur, Hainaut and the north of France.

"I hope you will get us out of this critical situation," the letter went on, "and hand the courier a list, as complete as possible, of all you have in the stores. It is absolutely necessary to profit from this occasion, none of our rivals being able to deliver. Excuse my insistence; the director reminds me in one of his last letters that you have always managed the business with devotion and activity. He tells me that this is the moment more than ever to look after the customers. Big business is being done, and will continue."

(This letter was dated February 21, 1916, the day that the German offensive started at Verdun.)

It was, without a doubt, an imprudent letter to write at such a time. Fall into German hands it undoubtedly did. One may visualise the glee with which they saw it. At all events, they photographed it and allowed it to go on for the time being.

. . . .

Poor Madame le Clercq was sitting in her shop in the rue de Campine on February 29 wondering, no doubt, what was going to happen to them all. She, as well as her husband, had been distinctly uneasy for some time past.

A rough-looking fellow entered the shop, pulled a letter out of his pocket and said, " For you, madame."

It was addressed Madame Dupont—her nom-de-guerre. But the man had a German accent, though he spoke French fairly well. Madame smelt a rat and shook her head with a decided : " Not for me. You have made a mistake."

The man leaned over the counter and whispered, " *The seven parcels of tri-coloured cigars have arrived all right.*" Madame Le Clercq jumped as though she had been shot.

" Who are you ? I know nothing about the arrival of any cigars. You had better come back and see my husband. As far as I know, he is expecting nothing from Holland."

He was a big, fat, greasy fellow, with a smile equally oily.

" Come, now," he said ingratiatingly, " you know who I am. Don't you know the password ? "

" I know nothing about any password, and I know nothing about you."

" You are making a mistake, madame. It is urgently necessary that I hand this letter to some one in the service. Perhaps you know some other address where I might take it."

" You've come to the wrong place."

The unwelcome visitor smiled once more. " I'll be back at four o'clock on Thursday," (it was then Tuesday) was his retort. " I've got one or two other people to see." With that he went off.

Feeling that something had suddenly gone wrong with the world, Madame Le Clercq called to a servant to attend to the shop and hurriedly made her way to the house of her cousin Lambrecht, oblivious of whether she was followed—which she probably was.

" What has happened ? " asked Dieudonné when he saw how panic-stricken she was.

" A man has just called at the shop with a letter for me, addressed Madame Dupont. He is a German Agent, Dieu-

donné. I couldn't get rid of him, though I told him the letter was not for me."

"Now, now, don't get alarmed. I am expecting a man from Holland. Did this fellow give you the password?"

"Yes, he said the seven parcels of tri-coloured cigars have arrived all right."

"Well, there's nothing wrong about that; you should have taken the letter." Gradually he reassured her; she took her departure feeling slightly easier in mind. But when she got back to the shop all her misgivings came back with redoubled force. The man had called again, finding neither her nor her husband in, and had left the letter with a message that if it was not for her she should destroy it straightaway. All that night the letter remained in the shop; she was afraid to take it round to her cousin's.

"What are you worrying about?" demanded Dieudonné when she handed him the letter the following morning. He had read it through. The signature was undoubtedly that of Arnould. "I'll see this fellow on Thursday."

A brave man, this Dieudonné Lambrecht! True to his word, he arrived at the Le Clercqs' shop at four o'clock the following day. But no one, least of all German police, turned up. He waited an hour and then left, telling Madame Le Clercq that he would be back next morning at ten o'clock. Foolishly enough, he left behind a batch of reports that had come in from various agents.

All Madame's fears returned a couple of hours later when the mysterious courier entered the shop.

"Sorry to be late," said he apologetically. "The damn Germans have delayed me. What's happening? Have you given my letter to the head of the service?"

"You're talking in riddles," retorted Madame angrily. "If you are from Holland, and you want to see anybody, you'd better come back at ten o'clock to-morrow morning." It flashed across her mind that if this man was really a German agent, it would be better to let her cousin decide what to do with him. The servant took a message over to Lambrecht's house to say that the courier had again presented himself, and what should she do. There was no need for him to come if he thought it inadvisable.

Lambrecht sent back a message that he would keep the appointment. He, at any rate, seemed to have no doubts.

In the trim little parlour at the back of the shop, then, Dieudonné met the courier. The fellow greeted him effusively, showed no signs of being anything but what he pretended to be, and talked so convincingly about Arnould that all

Dieudonné's suspicions were lulled. The two men chatted together for some time and Lambrecht handed over the letter containing the reports that he had left with his cousin the night before.

Madame le Clercq watched them leave the shop with doubting eyes, hoping against hope. They turned up the street where Landwerlen, the chief of the secret police in Liége, and his principal assistant, Douhard, were standing at the corner of the rue de l'Academie. Lambrecht knew them both ; but they took no notice of him just then. He said good-bye to the courier, and got on a tram.

And then he did know that he was in a trap ! Both policemen followed him on to the tram, never leaving him out of their sight. The question now was to warn everybody. Later in the afternoon, still under German surveillance, he went back to the cigar shop in the rue de Campine, and told his cousin Arthur that the Germans were on his trail. With despairing eyes the two men looked at each other, realising that to get out of Liége was next door to impossible. Lambrecht did not dare go home, which the Germans knew full well. That very same evening about half-past nine the courier boldly walked into the shop.

"Where can I find Lambrecht?" he demanded, mentioning his name for the first time. "I have got to be on my way to Holland first thing in the morning."

Le Clercq himself answered the question. "I can't give you any address. My cousin does not wish his wife to know that he has any business with Holland. Nor do I know anything about the matter."

"Go away without seeing him I will not," said the caller. They argued for half an hour, until finally in the forlorn hope that his suspicions were unfounded, Le Clercq said, "Then you had better make an appointment for the morning."

"That'll suit me very well. The Café Lion on the Quai de la Batte at half-past nine."

Thankful to be rid of the fellow, Le Clercq sent a message round to his cousin warning him of what he had done. Lambrecht replied that he, Le Clercq, had better keep the appointment himself. If nothing doubtful transpired, then he would meet the courier at the Café du Marronnier in the Place Maghin.

And so the cat-and-mouse game went on. Le Clercq turned up at the rendezvous : the oily-faced courier walked in after him, expressing surprise at the non-appearance of Lambrecht. The cigar merchant made what excuses he could, and after a time left to meet his cousin in the rue du Potay.

Casually turning his head from time to time, he noticed that he was being followed by Douhard ; he already knew this agent by sight. He jumped on a tram going towards the centre of the town, left it for another passing through the rue du Potay, and saw his cousin standing on the footpath. At his urgent call, Lambrecht leapt on the moving tram and Le Clercq hastily told him what had happened.

"For heaven's sake find that courier and destroy that letter," said Lambrecht agitatedly. "If it gets into German hands we are all done."

"We are done already," replied Le Clercq. "If that fellow isn't a German agent, I'm the biggest fool that was ever born." He alighted from the tram himself, making his way to his shop and wondering what it felt like to face a firing party in the early dawn, when he ran right into the wretched courier himself.

That individual was cheerfulness itself! "Where's Lambrecht?" he asked with a guileless face. "He didn't turn up at the Café du Marronnier."

"No, he thinks the German police are shadowing him."

"There's nothing to be frightened about."

"I think differently," said Le Clercq. "There's something wrong." Without saying anything more he went back to his shop, asking himself what would happen next.

Lambrecht himself realised the net was getting tighter. The Dutchman had not handed back the report and in desperation, feeling ill with the strain, he went home to lie down and ponder over what he should do next.

Le Clercq, feeling no better, left his shop in the afternoon, walking aimlessly towards the post office. Again the relentless watchers! It flashed across his mind that in the Café des Deux Fontaines he might find a means of escape ; there was a way out of it to the rue St. Michel at the back. No sooner had he made up his mind to make the attempt than two Germans, in plain clothes, accosted him.

"You come with us," said one roughly. "It is too late to warn your confederate."

"Where are you taking me?" demanded Le Clercq angrily.

"To the Palais de Justice." There was a motor-car waiting outside the café. Into it, with a warning not to give trouble, Le Clercq was bundled. He reached the Palais to find Landwerlen and four or five policemen ready for his arrival. Landwerlen questioned him.

"I know nothing ; this is an outrage," was all they got out of their prisoner. Landwerlen had him removed, the prey to thoughts the reverse of pleasant.

His cousin soon joined him. At five o'clock that afternoon the Germans descended upon his house. They found the front door open ; the servant girl had unfortunately chosen that vital moment to clean the front step. Lambrecht, preparing even then to make his escape over the roof, was caught unawares and hauled off to the Palais de Justice. But the raiders never discovered the damning documents that were hidden beneath a paving stone in the backyard. What did come to light, unluckily for him, was a number of letters in his own handwriting corresponding with the report he had copied to send to Holland by the false courier.

He would not talk, despite all the threats and inducements they held over him. When they realised that intimidation was all in vain, the Germans abandoned the attempt and contented themselves with bringing he and his cousin before a court-martial held on April 7, 1916. Madame Le Clercq had been released after twice being arrested and subjected to severe interrogation. She would say nothing. Threatened with death, she swore she knew nothing of the contents of the report that the false courier had picked up. Her husband stuck to the same tale.

They owed their lives to their cousin Lambrecht. He had promised when he enlisted them into his service that he would protect them to the best of his ability ; that word he religiously kept, despite all the threats and inducements to make him betray, not only the Le Clercqs, but his other colleagues. Even the Germans themselves said that his attitude was worthy of the highest admiration, and realising that nothing could be extracted from him, they gave up the attempt.

Whilst in prison Le Clercq and Lambrecht held a clandestine correspondence, the Belgian cook braving his life to carry messages from one to the other. One of the nuns, a Sister Melanie, also rendered them service in this direction, with the result that Lambrecht was able to convey to the other members of the service warning of what they should say if the police arrested them.

It appears certain that it was decided Lambrecht must be arrested at once when the German police read the report that he had taken to the cigar shop. It covered eight type-written pages. They must have opened their eyes in amazement on discovering that it contained a mass of information as to what was going on at Verdun and decided, band or no band, that Dieudonné Lambrecht was far too dangerous to be at liberty any longer.

He was condemned to death, as might have been expected

—in fact, he expected no other fate from the beginning. The Germans allotted him a "prisoner's friend," who was so impressed with Lambrecht's fine character that he personally attempted to have him reprieved. From all over Belgium came appeals to save this noble patriot. The Spanish Minister in Brussels, the Marquis de Villalobar, communicated with the King of Spain ; the Dutch Chargé d'Affaires persuaded the Queen of Holland, and Mr. Brand Whitlock the American Minister added his strong personal influence, to the purpose of having the sentence commuted. Even the prison chaplain, who had seen more of Lambrecht than any one since his arrest, was profoundly impressed by his bearing. Cardinal von Hartmann, the Archbishop of Cologne, took up the case. Nothing could move the authorities in Berlin. They blamed Lambrecht for much of the failure that attended the armies of the Crown Prince at Verdun.

On the afternoon of April 7 a telephone message reached the prison of St. Leonard, where he was confined, that Lambrecht was to be removed to the Fort of La Chartreuse. Le Clercq had been acquitted by a court-martial held five days after that of his cousin. The latter had sworn that Le Clercq knew nothing of the report that had been left at his shop on the rue de Campine, and by three votes to two the cigar merchant escaped death. However, he was sent to Germany as a prisoner of war, and remained there until October 25, 1918, when in company with other political captives he was permitted to return to his native land.

To his cousin Arthur and "Krull" Lambrecht wrote a last letter begging them to look after his wife and four-months-old baby. Early in the morning of April 18, while the armies of the Crown Prince were still hammering at Verdun in a desperate effort to retrieve the failures of the last two months, Dieudonné Lambrecht was brought out for execution at La Chartreuse. He died like a hero, confident that his work would go on, calm in the knowledge that he had sacrificed no other lives.

Behind him he had left a legacy that was to have a profound effect on the Great War. Out of his death there arose another and infinitely greater organisation—the League of the Phantom Lady. In the suburb of Thièr-a-Liége, where Lambrecht lived, another cousin took up the threads of the service, and developed it to a pitch that Lambrecht had never dreamed of.

A FRENCH SPY SPEAKS

ANONYMOUS

CHANCE took Lieutenant Henri Levée to Prague in March, 1929. There he received through the French military attaché an invitation to a dinner at the American Embassy. The occasion of the festivity, as he learnt that same evening, was the visit of Edgar Burns, a captain in the American engineering corps who was closely related to the ambassador.

"Burns is considered a very fine engineer over the other side," said the French military attaché to Levée, "and I've heard that he got a couple of very big prizes and money payments from the American war office, though for what reason nobody knows."

"Is that a bait for me to swallow?" inquired Levée.

"Why should it be?" replied the other with a smile. "I heard about the business a few weeks ago when I was in Warsaw. But the things that happen in America are no concern of us Europeans. There are others who can worry their heads about them."

Levée was not satisfied with this answer. "Did you notice," he remarked, "that the American military attachés from more than half the United States embassies and legations in Europe are here to-night? They couldn't have made more fuss if the Emperor of America had turned up. It would be worth while to overhear a thing or two, but the fellow who can worm a secret out of an American wasn't born yesterday."

As no ladies were present, the party continued until the early hours of the morning. Burns was a magnet for the American military attachés, and occupied the centre of a number of small intimate groups that were formed in various corners of the dining-room when the meal was over.

Levée followed the proceedings with great excitement, which rose almost to fever-heat because he sensed the concealment of some secret of which it seemed impossible to gain the slightest inkling. He deliberately avoided Burns's company, and was glad that his introduction to the guest of the evening was confined to a few brief formalities that left the latter no lasting impression of his own personality.

The fact was that plans had already begun to mature in Levée's brain.

About 1 a.m. that morning he went to the cloak-room to get a packet of cigarettes from his overcoat. He found it empty; the tired attendant in charge sat in the hall.

Suddenly he pricked up his ears. Some one was talking in his immediate neighbourhood. He listened sharply and discovered that the conversation was taking place on the farther side of a locked door leading into one of the side-rooms adjoining the dining-room. He crept up to the door.

"You can save yourself the trouble," he heard Burns say. "Even if you came to Sacramento, it wouldn't be any use. I guess it's the most secret arsenal in the whole U.S.A."

"That's what we thought," replied a voice, belonging presumably to one of the American attachés. "But we can't understand why they're turning out the darn things in mass production over there."

After a while the attachés with Burns finished their drinks and left the room. Levée also returned to the dining-room.

A few days later Levée returned to Paris. He reported himself at once to Major S., the chief of the French Intelligence Service, to whom he related his experience in Prague. The major understood Levée better than the attaché in Prague had done; he summoned two experts, and a conference took place on the advisability of making a further investigation of the matter. The decision was finally a unanimous affirmative.

Then came the question as to who could undertake the mission. As far as Major S. was concerned, there was only one answer to it, because the French Intelligence Service contained only one specialist in English and American affairs—and that was Levée.

"Well, my dear fellow, what about it?" he inquired of the lieutenant.

Levée gripped the major's hand joyfully. "Mr Brandes will do his duty!" he exclaimed. Brandes was a name he had used on several previous missions.

A few days later he had worked out his plan and made preparations for an unobtrusive disappearance from Paris. The military gazette announced that Lieutenant Levée had been transferred to a colonial regiment in Africa. When he was officially presumed to be there, Mr. Brandes was enjoying the sea-breezes on a liner sailing for New York from Bordeaux.

Brandes, as we must now call him, did not stay long in New York, but during his sojourn there he studied all the maps that could give him information about Sacramento. On one of them he found an aerodrome known as "Mather Field" in the neighbourhood of that town, and guessed that his goal lay there.

From Paris he had brought a number of false identity papers which proved him to be an American citizen. In New York he completed his wardrobe with the purchase of several second-hand suits of American clothing, after which he discarded all the garments he brought from France. Then he went to a Labour Exchange Office which dealt with applications for work in various States and asked whether there were any vacancies for lorrymen or canteen assistants. He made particular inquiries as to the likelihood of obtaining such work in California. From the clerk he obtained a written statement that he had applied for work in California, but received no offers.

Equipped with all the various papers made out in the name of Brandes, he then travelled to California and alighted at Vallejo, the next station to Sacramento. Here he took up his temporary abode, registered at the local Labour Exchange and went over to Sacramento every other day in order to pick up as much detailed information as possible about Mather Field Aerodrome.

Then help came to him suddenly from the Labour Exchange. He received word that a certain John Miller, the proprietor of a store dealing in provisions, tools, furniture and iron and steel ware, wanted a driver. Brandes inquired whether Miller dealt with customers on the aerodrome and ascertained that he received daily orders from it, because he supplied the officers' mess and the canteen with practically all they needed.

Brandes hastened to Miller and was told that he would have to work twelve to fourteen hours a day on delivery of goods ordered by customers in the district. His wages would be eighteen dollars a week, together with a small bedroom over the store.

On the second day of his work with Miller he had to deliver goods for the canteen and officers' mess. He received a special card to show at the gates, authorising him to enter the aerodrome. The sentinel admitted no one who could not produce such a card, and Brandes noticed that the two men on duty for this purpose were an officer and an N.C.O. He decided that the secret within its grounds must be a very special one if officers had to undertake ordinary sentry work.

It did not take him long to deliver the order for the officers' mess. Then came the canteen, where he tried to stay as long as possible because he saw that this was the likeliest place to pick up information. After each delivery he had to go to the orderly room to get his receipt stamped.

Brandes took care to cultivate the acquaintance of the canteen's manager. He devoted no less attention to Bob, the waiter, an old disabled N.C.O. who had fought in France and wanted every one to know the fact.

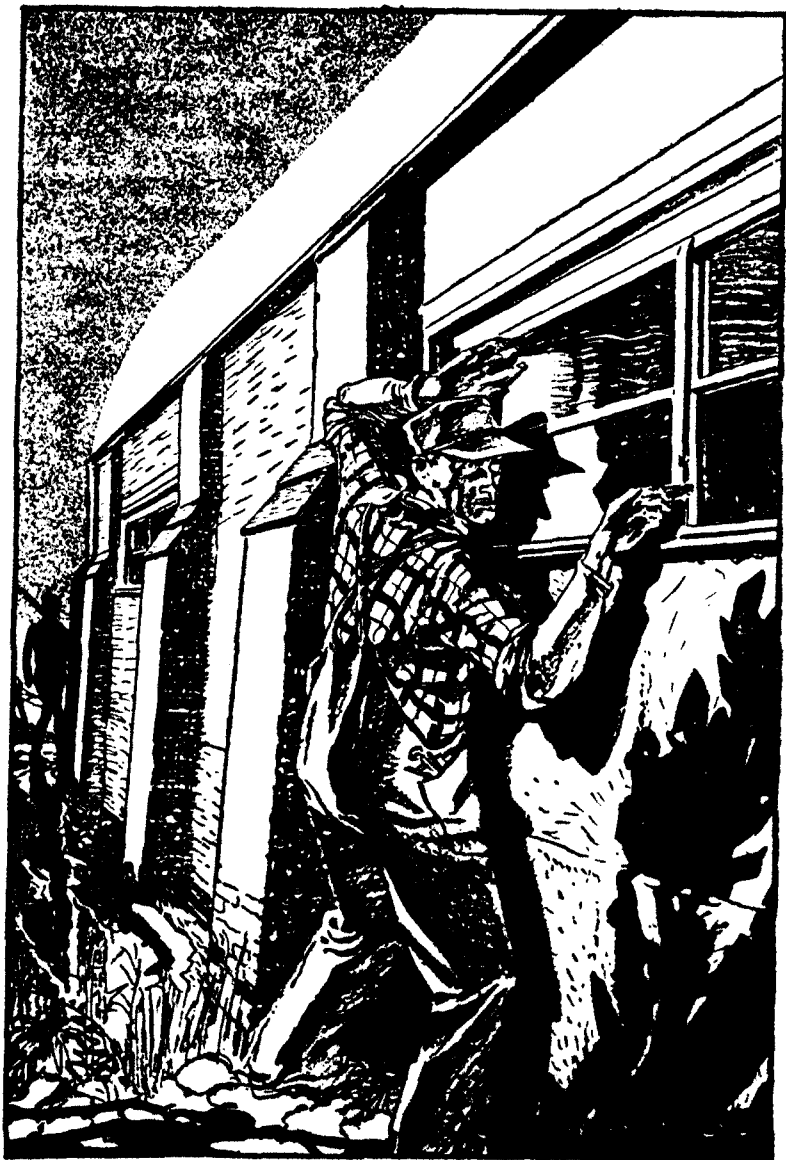
Brandes came out with a large number of cigarettes that day, but he soon gave them all away. He noticed that every one in the canteen liked smoking them because they were a cent apiece dearer than those they generally bought. When he had done his business, he sat down in the canteen and invited Bob to share a bottle of beer with him. Three other bottles followed ; they proved a good introduction, and Brandes became aware of the fact that Bob was very fond of beer, especially when some one else paid for it.

When Brandes had worked a fortnight, during which period he visited the aerodrome almost every day to deliver orders, he was a bosom friend of Bob, and stood almost as well with the manager, especially as he took care that there were no more complaints from mess or canteen about the inferior quality of the goods supplied as had formerly been the case.

He decided that his next task was to explore the aerodrome. Chance again came to his aid several days later in the shape of an order he had to deliver to a farmer whose property touched the north-eastern edge of the aerodrome, where according to Bob F. Hangar was located.

Brandes tried to cultivate the farmer's acquaintance. He told him that for some time he had been on the look-out for a job on a farm, because he had been brought up to agriculture. He obtained an invitation from the farmer to look round his place on the following Sunday.

This visit took his plans a step further. He ascertained that the boundary between the farm and the aerodrome was marked off by a barbed wire fence behind a ditch. Several yards beyond this defence lay F. Hangar, the roof of which was barely six feet above the ground. The hangar's wall which faced the farm property was nearly three hundred feet long, but contained only a few iron-barred windows about two feet in height. The hangar received the rest of its light from windows let in to the roof.

Every ten minutes or so a sentinel appeared. Brandes

He tried to insert a thin wedge between the window and the frame close to the catch. Through the tiny aperture thus formed he poured hydrochloric acid on to the catch.

deduced that he marched round and round the building. He saw no doors to the hangar, and judged that they must be on the opposite side. He also concluded that he could easily get round to them, provided that he could negotiate the fence separating the farm from the aerodrome without being observed by the sentinel. Having acquired all this information, he took leave of the farmer and returned home.

The following evening he returned to the farm at dusk, slunk up to the fence and excavated a passage under the barbed wire—a task which the sandy soil rendered quite easy. Having found sufficient loose grass to mask the opening he had made, he then tried whether he could crawl through and gain the nearest window in the wall between the sentinel's rounds. He examined the window's iron catch, which was operated from within, but seemed fairly frail. After this he fled back to the farm and covered up the hole under the fence.

The next night he returned with various tools and a bottle of hydrochloric acid. When he crept through the opening and reached the wall, he tried to insert a thin wedge between the window and the frame close to the catch. Through the tiny aperture thus formed he poured hydrochloric acid on to the catch and then made off again. He repeated this procedure for the next three nights; on the fourth visit he found that the acid had eaten into the catch to such an extent that it was ready to yield at the first hard pressure. His way was now clear.

But Brandes waited several days. The next Monday was Armistice Day, which meant that he had both Sunday and Monday free. He told Miller that he was going away for a motor-car trip with a friend over the holidays, and went off to the farm on the Saturday night.

He had a good supply of tools, candles and provisions. About eleven o'clock he was at the window, where he found the catch completely eaten away by the acid. The next moment he was through the window and inside the dark building. He closed the window cautiously and awaited the sentinel's next round.

When the coast was clear, he found a hiding-place for his bag of provisions and proceeded to the interior of the hangar, guided by the moonlight that shone through the windows in the roof. He made out the outlines of various objects that enabled him to find his way about, but as it was still too dark to work, he sought a resting-place on a huge packing-case and slept there till dawn.

When the sun's first rays streamed through the glass

in the roof, he was up and about. He made a tour of inspection and could not conceal his astonishment when he saw thousands of torpedoes, about six feet long and two feet in diameter, all greased and packed neatly in crates. He climbed up to the topmast layer of these and began his investigations.

With the aid of his tools he tried to take one of the torpedoes to pieces. It was a difficult operation, but after seven hours' hard work he managed it. Suddenly he noticed letters and figures on the inner casing of the copper shell; when he examined them he could hardly control his joy. For there stood engraved

BURNS AIR TORPEDO
120 cartridges=1920 bullets

Brandes had never seen so perfect an instrument. He began to make sketches of all its component parts, of which he noted the measurements and various details. Night interrupted him at this task; when he had made a meal, he retired to rest.

Early the next morning he was at work again. His sketches were soon finished. Then he put the torpedo together again, (a task which he completed more quickly than he anticipated) and placed his notes in a leather bag he wore next to his skin.

Then he went the round of the hangar and noted all its contents. He found about four thousand of these torpedoes stored away; then at the end of the hangar he came upon a narrow passage-way, which seemed likely to lead to E. hangar. It was dark when he descended, but about forty feet away he discerned a faint glimmer that indicated the end of the corridor. Slowly and cautiously he slunk along the passage towards this brightness, but when he reached the exit a thrill of horror went through his body, and he cowered motionless against the wall, as though petrified by what he had seen. His eyes stared at the sentinel who faced him barely a yard away.

Brandes could hardly breathe. "All lost!" something seemed to scream inside his brain. He crouched against the wall, waiting for what would happen next.

For full five minutes Brandes stood motionless. So did the sentinel. Brandes did not carry a weapon, but a resolve flashed through his brain to sell his life dearly as possible. Cautiously he drew himself up to his full height, but, strangely enough, the sentinel made no movement.

One tigerish spring—and Brandes tore the rifle out of his hands. The sentinel collapsed on to the ground without making a single effort to defend himself.

And then Brandes stared at the waxen face of the prostrate figure and realised the significance of the deception to which he had fallen a victim. The sentinel was a dummy.

The day was drawing to its close. It was high time for Brandes to finish his expedition. He noted on paper as many details of the aeroplanes as he could gather, collected his tools and the remainder of his provisions and returned to await the coming of night at the window where he had entered.

At last it was dark enough for Brandes to contemplate leaving his hiding-place. As soon as he was outside, he closed the window quickly and disappeared behind the fence, where he filled in the opening with sand. Quickly but cautiously he passed through the farm property, until he at length reached the road. When he arrived back at the store, he stowed his tools away in the garage and went up to his room, when he sewed all his drawings and notes into the lining of his travelling suit.

Brandes pondered over his future plans and decided that it would be a mistake to vanish too suddenly from the scene, for if E. and F. hangars were inspected within the next few days, the fallen dummy and the disorder he had created must be discovered. Then a quick flight would arouse suspicion.

On the following day he had to deliver goods at the aerodrome. The time of his visit was an anxious one, and yet he dared not curtail it unduly. He told Bob about the splendid trip he had enjoyed and allowed him to consume the usual number of bottles at his expense. When the manager joined them, he acquainted them both of his decision to get work on a farm, because agriculture was his true vocation. The manager sought to dissuade him, pointing out that no farm would give him the freedom he now enjoyed.

Brandes replied that he had not quite made up his mind and would think things over, but on the next day he told Miller that he wanted to finish on the Saturday because a relation in New York State had offered him a job. Miller was truly sorry to hear this news, because he found Brandes a driver with a sense of duty that pleased him.

During the next two days the time Brandes had to spend at the aerodrome seemed an eternity, but he knew that he had to exercise every precaution and not let the slightest breath of suspicion fall on him. At least ten days must

elapse after his departure before he could gain the safety of the ocean.

At last the hour of parting came. Miller gave him a lavish supply of provisions for the journey and a bonus of ten dollars.

One fine Monday morning Major S. appeared at his office earlier than usual. He intended to glance through his letters and then go off to spend his leave in Lorraine. He had just finished his morning mail and was about to send for Captain G., his second in command, when the door opened, and Lieutenant Levée stood before him.

Levée sat down and began his report, but he could not get further than the tale of his investigations in F. hangar and his encounter with the dummy.

The major's joy was plainly written on his face as he interrupted him: "You must take a few days' leave, my dear fellow, and come along with me to Lorraine. There we shall have time to go into the details of your splendid feat throughly. Just give me a minute or two, and then we'll be off."

The Major sat down and scribbled a few lines; he put them in an envelope, which he addressed to the chief of the general staff. Then the two men left the office.

They took up their quarters in the Esplanade Hotel at Nancy. On the third day of their sojourn an orderly brought a letter for Levée, inviting him to call on the general commanding the district at twelve o'clock.

Strangely enough the two officers were shown in to the general's room together. The latter shook hands with Levée in most friendly fashion.

"Lieutenant Levée," he began, "I have the honour to hand you in the name of the president of the French Republic the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, which task I shall perform forthwith." He then pinned the cross on the recipient's tunic and kissed him on both cheeks.

Major S. advanced to Levée and offered his congratulations. From an adjacent room the higher officers of the garrison then entered to congratulate Levée, after which the general summoned them all to lunch.

But with the exception of Major S. none of those present knew the reason why Levée had been singled out for such honour. None of them ascertained the reason later.

THE CAPTURE OF SCHLEICHER

By

BERNARD NEWMAN

During the middle period of the War the author, an English Intelligence Officer, actually held a position at the German G.H.Q. whence he was sent as a German Agent *on the amazing mission described below.*

IN the middle of 1917, there arrived at General Headquarters at Kreuznach a suggestion which differed from the rest in that it was obviously put forward by an educated man—the others almost invariably were made by fanatical but ignorant enthusiasts. The letter which he wrote ran into several pages of closely reasoned argument—very logical argument too. He pointed out that, in spite of the entry of America, Britain was the greatest of Germany's enemies. If only we could shake Britain to her foundations then victory would very soon be ours. And, he argued, for all practical purposes Britain is now one man—Mr. Lloyd George. Therefore he suggested that he should be commissioned to proceed to England to assassinate Mr. Llyod George.

As usual the offer was turned down. The author of the letter received a very polite but formal note informing him that it was quite impossible to take advantage of his suggestion, and instructing him that he must not think in any way of pursuing it further.

When I sent off this stock letter—Ammer told me that earlier in the war such offers were so frequently received that he had considered the possibility of printing or duplicating a suitable reply—I thought that I had heard the last of the matter. But a fortnight later I was informed, on returning to my office, that a Herr Schleicher was waiting to see me. The name sounded familiar, but is common enough in Germany; but after a minute's conversation with my visitor I discovered that he was the man who had written such a logical appreciation of the situation and had volunteered to murder Mr. Llyod George. I looked at him in some surprise. He did not fit in the conventional picture of an assassinator at all. He was a little man—not perky as some little men are, but very meek and mild. I could easily imagine him being bullied by a large and strong-minded

wife, but I could not see him taking part in any action which required force—either of character or physique. He would be nearly fifty years of age, I should think, and this, combined with his low physical category, doubtless explained why he was not engaged on any form of military service.

He explained that he was totally dissatisfied with the letter he had received. He was convinced that Mr. Lloyd George was the key to the whole opposition front, and if once this key could be removed that front would collapse. I might even have agreed with him had I spoken my real mind. He demanded to know if there were any further reasons why his suggestion should not be carried out, complaining that he was by no means convinced. I argued with him for some time—and meant every word I said—when I first persusaded but later commanded him to dismiss the whole idea from his mind. I suggested other ways in which he might help his country—for it was obviously a patriotic complex which had him in thrall. This line seemed to be successful, and when he left me I certainly thought that I had convinced him that the scheme was dangerous and impracticable. So much so that I did not even trouble to report his visit to any one, or to put him under police supervision.

Judge my surprise and concern, therefore, when a week later I received a further letter from him in which he said that he had considered all my arguments, but after pondering them very carefully he remained convinced that his own suggestion was the best. He quite appreciated it was impossible for General Headquarters or the Government to be associated with such a plan, so he proposed to carry it out by himself. Then the German Government would be able to plead complete irresponsibility. He had found out a way of reaching England, he said, through the kind offices of a cousin who occupied a consular position in Sweden, and by the time this letter was received, he continued, he hoped to be in England ; within a very few days we should hear that our greatest enemy was no more.

There was great consternation in the Staff circles. The fool had played right into the enemy hands, they said. Evidently he did not realise what the ramifications of police work meant. Assuming that he did succeed in assassinating Mr. Lloyd George, the English police would without difficulty trace back the method by which he had entered the country, and if they once traced him to the cousin who was a consul—that is to say, a German official—in Sweden, well, then it would be absurd for the German Government to deny

responsibility. For although it would be true, yet not a single person in the wide world would believe it.

What was to be done? There were obvious objections to direct communication with the British Government, although one officer did suggest a warning message via the King of Spain or the Queen of Holland. But he was over-ruled by higher opinion, which demurred from action which might so easily be misinterpreted. During the conference I saw my late chief, Colonel Nicolai, looking at me; I had been so long with him that I knew what was in his mind. I did not wait to be invited therefore, but made the suggestion myself—that I should hurry to England with all speed and should endeavour to get hold of this idiot Schleicher myself. Once I had discovered him, it would have to be left to my discretion how I dealt with him. If I could bring him back, that would be the best solution: he could be thrown into prison for the remainder of the war. Or I could, if circumstances permitted, knock him out. I was promised complete exoneration even from the charge of murder if I should kill him in the doing of it—although I pointed out that such exoneration was worth very little, inasmuch as the crime would be committed on British soil. Only in the last emergency was I to denounce him to the British police. Then I myself would have to take my chance. They had a perfect right to arrest me as a prisoner of war, if not as a spy. My only hope was that, having done them such a good turn, they would let me go in return. Even as these suggestions were thrown at me I propounded a fourth—the possibility of framing up some comparatively minor crime on Schleicher, causing him to be arrested and imprisoned for this.

My great difficulty was getting to England. Not that I could not have used my ordinary route through Holland, but this took more than three days, whereas Schleicher, according to his note, might already be in England. It was Zwink of the Air staff who came to my assistance.

Zwink got for me a special parachute which had been evolved but had not yet passed its final tests—although the preliminary trials had been comparatively satisfactory, particularly when the pilot or observer was able to drop from the aeroplane at a considerable height. He suggested, therefore, that I should go to England by aeroplane which, flying very high, would be able to evade the defences lying about the coast and the fringe of London. Then, at a suitable spot over open country, the pilot would descend to a proper height, and I would jump out of the aeroplane; the parachute would do the rest. He proposed that I should go over

in the uniform of the British Royal Flying Corps. Then naturally no one would have any suspicion, but on the other hand would be ready to give me any assistance I wanted.

In the early hours of the night we were over the English coast, flying very high so that it was utterly impossible for us to be spotted. My pilot then began a gradual descent. On the near horizon we could see the shaded lights of London—not the bright yellow glare of peace time, but a sort of dull red haze which lifted London from its surroundings; for, in spite of all lighting restrictions, I can say from experience that it was the easiest thing in the world for a raiding aeroplane to find London. A quarter of an hour later the pilot signalled to me that we were at the right height, and I prepared for my ordeal. Nervously I fingered the straps about me. Would they hold my fairly considerable weight? Would the parachute open—what a miserable death if it failed! I tried to pull myself together.

"Steady yourself, you fool," I said to myself. "You've only got to keep your head for ten seconds. Just jump, count ten, and then pull the cord which opens the parachute That's all. Just count ten." Nevertheless, could I in my state of nerves keep my head long enough to count ten? It sounds easy enough, but to those who may laugh at my fear I can only recommend that they should try it for themselves. Even to-day, after this lapse of time, I shudder at my fright at that moment. I tried hard to think of protective prayers, yet I was so rattled that no deity could ever have understood my invocations.

My pilot, when I saw him weeks afterwards, agreed that I looked very scared as I climbed to the spot which had been shown to me, and prepared to drop overboard. Scared was not really a strong enough word. I was tremendously frightened. I am not more nervous than any other man on land, I think, but this was something right out of my line—it must be a nerve-racking job even if you are used to it, but to me it was sheer torture.

Yet it had to be done. I let go, and immediately began to count ten. It seemed as if I were freezing with horror as I shot down towards the earth at a terrible pace. I was tremendously tempted to pull the cord long before I reached ten—at this rate surely I must hit the ground within the ten seconds! But I waited—at least until nine—when I pulled the cord as I had been directed. To my horror I shot down and down. Had the parachute failed to open? My poor brain whirled round and round, and for several seconds I

could experience no conscious thought. When my mind at last became rational, I found that I was now sailing down at a comfortable rate. Above me against the blackness of the sky I could see a great, white, ghostly shape. So, like the navvy who fell out of the ninth story window, I was all right so far.

Actually I was all right all the way—except that I had no idea that the ground was so near, so that when I did land it was with such a bump that I bit my lip and shook myself up severely. However, there I was—very, very thankful and happy to be on soid earth again—and, what was more, in England. Hurriedly I unstrapped the parachute, took out my torch, and signalled to the pilot circling round up above. Immediately on receiving my signal he made off to the south and I was alone.

I had only the faintest idea where I was. Somewhere in the middle of a field certainly, and I could hear the rustling of trees not very far away. The ground was rather hilly, and I guessed from the direction our aeroplane had taken that I must be somewhere about the North Downs. By this time it was very nearly midnight, but I wanted to get to London immediately. I walked on, therefore, through two or three fields until at last I came to a farm lane. Following this along, just before I hit the main road I saw on the bank above me a house of considerable size. There were no lights showing—every one had long since gone to bed, but I had no hesitation in knocking the people up. It was the owner of the house who eventually came to the door, wondering what on earth had disturbed his peaceful slumber in this quiet corner of England. I explained to him that I was a Royal Flying Corps officer who had been making an experimental descent by parachute, but unfortunately I had been blown right off my anticipated course and had completely lost touch with the R. F. C. tender which should have met me. Could he therefore tell me where I could get a car as it was essential that I should go back to London at once to report the result of the test.

There was no difficulty about this. The man was of some means and had a car of his own in the garage. Like most of his class—the English country gentry—he was a man of tremendous patriotic fervour ; he had two sons in the navy, and he himself was engaged in administrative work war of some kind in Whitehall. He asked me only to wait while he dressed, and he would drive me up to town himself. Leaving me with a selection of drinks, he went off to put on some clothes. Although I am naturally a very abstemious man. I don't mind confessing that this was one of the few

occasions in my life when a stiff tot of whisky did a tremendous lot to restore my nerves to their normal steady condition.

I had landed near Oxted, I discovered. The road at this time of night was clear. My host knew the way, and in little more than an hour I found myself in Whitehall. He was rather concerned when I asked him to drive direct to Scotland Yard instead of to the Flying Corps Headquarters in the Strand. There I dismissed him, after taking his name in order that he might be thanked for his invaluable assistance at a more suitable time.

I had naturally determined to take the Special Branch of Scotland Yard into my secret immediately—my conversation with the German Staff on this subject was mere eyewash. True, I still considered that it was my job to tackle Schleicher and that I had the best chance of any one of catching him. But at least I wanted to put Mr. Lloyd George's personal guard on the *qui vive*. The first man to whom I spoke at Scotland Yard was rather inclined to take no notice of me. I could scarcely blame him, for they received rumours of assassination or similar reports about twenty times a day. I asked, therefore, for a telephone call to be put through to Sir Basil Thompson, who was doubtless by this time in bed. He was, but I got through to him and a few words put matters right. I was to be given every assistance, and full note was to be taken of anything I had to say and the necessary action taken immediately.

First I asked about Schleicher. Had he landed in England yet? All the records received from the ports were examined, but there was no trace of any man answering the descriptions I gave—for naturally he would not attempt to enter England under his own name, but would doubtless take a Swedish patronymic. I asked that instructions should be sent out immediately to all ports, particularly those on the east coast, to keep the sharpest look-out for such a man arriving from the direction of Sweden ; immediately he arrived he was to be arrested and I was to be notified. It will be seen that I had already deviated considerably from the method suggested at General Headquarters, but I was playing for safety. Once I had got Schleicher into my hands I could easily think out some suitable story that would satisfy G.H.Q.

The existing records showed no trace of such an arrival, but those of the previous day had still to be received. After assuring myself that Mr. Lloyd George's personal guard—he was at the moment at Downing Street—had been warned and reinforced, I thought myself entitled to a few hours' sleep, which I took at Scotland Yard itself. No mention of

the matter, I should say in passing, was made to the Prime Minister. As I have said, threats of assassination were reported frequently to Scotland Yard, and had the intended victim been told of all of them he would always have been on tenterhooks. For, courageous as a man may be—and Mr. Lloyd George has never shown himself short of courage—he cannot be expected to produce his best brain work if he is continually haunted by the thought that an assassin's bullet lurks around the next corner. I did ask, however, that I might be kept closely in touch with the Prime Minister's movements during the next few days, in order that I myself might always be somewhere handy, so that if Schleicher put in an appearance I would be ready to identify him.

Nothing happened during the next day. At Scotland Yard it was reported that Schleicher apparently had not yet landed in England. The records had now been more carefully examined, but no man answering his physical description and claiming to be a Swede or any other Scandinavian had arrived. The only one whose description in any way fitted Schleicher was an American Government official who had been visiting Sweden on some minor war service, and was returning to America via England.

I spent the whole of the day at Downing Street ; for the time being I was a member of the Special Section of Scotland Yard. Mr. Lloyd George was engaged in conference for the whole of the morning and afternoon. In the evening he went over to the House of Commons, and I went with him—although he did not know it. There were quite a number of people about Whitehall, but no signs of Schleicher. Possibly I had come on a fool's errand after all. Perhaps he was merely indulging an idle boast when he said that he was coming to do the job. Alternatively, perhaps he had found it more difficult to get into England than he had thought—maybe his consul cousin in Sweden had been sensible enough to send him home.

The next morning, however, I got the shock of my life. Sundry small parcels had arrived at 10 Downing Street, and Mr. Lloyd George's manservant was sorting them out. Among them was a box of cigars.

" Mr. Lloyd George is fond of a good cigar, I hear," I commented casually.

" Yes," said the man, " he is, but I don't know where these can have come from. I certainly didn't order them. They must be from some admirer of his." He was opening the package as he spoke. " Yes," he continued, " and some one who knows his taste too. This is his favourite cigar.

Strange though," he went on, " there isn't any note inside. There usually is. I wonder who sent them ! "

He fingered the brown paper cover and examined it. There was no postmark, for the parcel had been delivered by hand. He called to the hall boy.

" How did these cigars get here, George? Did anybody leave a card with them ? "

" No," said the hall boy. " A messenger boy brought them. Just handed them in. Said, ' For Mr. Lloyd George,' and popped off again. I had to sign a receipt, of course. That was all right, wasn't it ? "

The butler asked him one or two more questions, but I was not listening. I was looking hard at the address which had been written on the brown paper. The easiest way to find out the nationality of a man is to study his handwriting, for nearly every European country has a different method of teaching writing. There is the widest of deviation, for example, between the writing of an Englishman and the writing of a Frenchman. Even if they were writing out the same words in the same language, there are always some letters in particular which are written in a manner peculiar to the country concerned. It is the same with the English and German caligraphy. And, as I looked at this address, carefully printed, I saw just two or three things which made me certain that no Englishman ever wrote it—what was more, that it had been written by a German. Immediately, therefore, I picked up the box of cigars.

" I shall take charge of these," I said to the amazed butler.

" But what's the matter ? " he complained—perhaps such things were one of his perquisites. I don't know.

" I'm not satisfied about them," I insisted. " I want to find out where they came from. George ! " I called to the hall boy. " This messenger, who was he ? Did you know him ? What company ? "

" An ordinary district messenger," he said. " They've got an office just by Trafalgar Square. He may have come from there. I've seen him about often enough. I don't know his name."

I called one of the plain-clothes men to me. " Take George up to the District Messenger Office at once," I ordered. " It is essential that we find out who handed in this parcel to be delivered."

That did not take very long. Within half an hour he was back—with the alarming news that the parcel had been handed in for dispatch by a meek-looking little man wearing a

blue serge suit—a man who answered in every particular to the description of Schleicher! Nor was my consternation lessened when, about two hours later, I was notified by the Government Laboratory that the cigars were impregnated with aconite poison.

I realised now that I had made an elementary and fundamental error. I had completely underestimated the capacity of my opponent. I had never imagined that the meek little man I had interviewed at Kreuznach would ever have the initiative to find out which were Mr. Lloyd George's favourite cigars, much less to make the attempt which I had detected almost by accident. From this moment onwards I decided on drastic measures. Schleicher had proved to be no mean innocent, but an opponent of cunning. He must be treated accordingly.

Although Mr. Lloyd George did not know it, his household that night was reminiscent of fiercer and eastern times. For, before his dinner was served, a portion of every one of the dishes—he had one or two important guests to dinner—was previously fed to one of the domestic cats or dogs to make perfectly certain that it was innocuous. I have often tried to imagine what the fiery and courageous Welshman would have thought and said had he witnessed this strange scene. But I was taking no risks.

He did not go out that night, and after he had retired to bed I contented myself with posting a double guard about the house. Actually I had no fear of nocturnal attempts, for the approaches to Downing Street literally bristled with uniformed and plain-clothed policemen, and nobody but a fool would attempt to penetrate the cordon with malicious intent. And I had now found out that Schleicher was no fool.

This was a Saturday. Mr. Lloyd George's arrangements for the Sunday were immature until his dinner party was over. Then he instructed his man that he would be going to his country house at Walton Heath first thing in the morning. Immediately I was anxious. I knew something of Mr. Lloyd George's habits—how he loved to roam alone about the Surrey Hills—and in them were excellent opportunities for a prospective assassinator, no matter how vigilant a guard might be. I must assume that Schleicher knew of the Prime Minister's normal week-end custom—that is, to go to Walton Heath whenever the affairs of state were not too pressing. He would probably have ascertained this interesting detail from the same paragraph of society chit-chat which told him of Mr. Lloyd George's favourite brand of cigar. The following day, therefore, I decided inwardly, was one of danger.

As I thought it over, suddenly I had an idea. I went to the telephone and tried to get through to Clarkson's, on the off-chance that some one might be working there on a rush order. The shop, however, was closed, so I got through to Willy Clarkson's private address—for I had known him well in my actor days before the war; every actor was bound to know Willy Clarkson. I told him what I wanted, emphasised that it was urgent, and although he was just about to go to bed he very sportingly agreed to run back to Wardour Street and fit me up with what I wanted. An hour later I met him there, and then this supreme artist in his own line got busy.

My scheme will already be obvious. I wanted to rig myself up as Mr. Lloyd George, to take a walk about Walton Heath the following morning in the hope of attracting Schleicher's attention. So far as the features of the Prime Minister were concerned, the disguise was child's play to a man like Clarkson. Within half an hour I was arrayed in the flowing grey locks and rather ragged moustache which typified the Mr. Lloyd George of that day. I could use no grease paint if I was to work in the open air, but a little imperceptible powder and a few dark lines added the necessary years. My only physical difficulty was that I was very considerably larger than Mr. Lloyd George. Fortunately, however, he had a well-known habit of promenading in a loose cloak. It would be easy for me to get hold of this cloak at his house and thus arrayed I could, by stooping, suggest the necessary shortage of inches. In any case, this question of detail was not so important as it might have been in other circumstances, for Schleicher would probably never have seen more than photographs of Mr. Lloyd George, and although he might know that he was on the short side, he would certainly have no idea to within an inch or two.

So I left Willy Clarkson with sincere and grateful thanks. Having taken off and packed up my disguise, I went down in a car closely following that of Mr. Lloyd George to Walton Heath the following morning immediately after breakfast. I made discreet inquiries as to the Prime Minister's plans for the day. I was told that he would probably rest and read in his study for the morning, although he might take a sharp walk to give him an appetite for lunch.

The Special Service men from Scotland Yard, who acted as Mr. Lloyd George's almost unknown and apparently unseen bodyguard, were a very fine lot of fellows, specially selected for such a delicate task. I picked out one who

appealed to me, a Sergeant Marshall, and instructed him to come out with me, first of all revealing my intention. Suitably disguised as Mr. Lloyd George, I proposed to take his favourite walk over the hills—which it would have been quite easy for Schleicher to have ascertained. Marshall—in very plain clothes, of course, and apparently a local tradesman taking his country walk—was to follow me at a distance of a hundred yards or so and to see what happened. As I made the arrangement I thought that I was indeed playing for safety first, for I knew very well that I could deal with a little whipper-snapper like Schleicher without any difficulty. However, a second man might be handy when I had knocked him out.

Marshall was armed, but I was not. I instructed him that only in the gravest emergency was he to use his revolver. We wanted to attract no attention : if possible, the arrest must be carried out without observation at all. Above all, Mr. Lloyd George must have no hint of the proceedings. As I have already said, a man who is controlling the ship of State in such heavy seas as raged about it in 1917 ought not to be bothered by personal details—especially a threat of assassination which might prove to be ludicrous in its execution.

I drove in a closed car to the end of the town, well clear from all the houses—for although I ought to be able to deceive a foreigner like Schleicher, I could not so easily take in one of the locals, who might have seen the Prime Minister a hundred times. Clear of all traces of human habitation, however, I took up my part. Well enveloped in one of Mr. Lloyd George's voluminous cloaks, and wearing one of the rather nondescript hats which he favoured at that time, I strode with his Celtic energy across the rolling Downs before me. Facially my make-up was perfect. My stoop meant that my back was necessarily a little bent, but this was a detail which I felt certain Schleicher would be too unobservant to notice. A good hundred yards behind trailed the faithful Marshall, strolling casually along as if neither time nor anything else mattered.

Five minutes later I met a man—evidently a local gardener—returning to the town. Without hesitation he raised his hat and gave me an obsequious good-morning. I returned to him one of Mr. Lloyd George's famous smiles. This gave me the necessary confidence.

For another mile I met not a soul. I admired the Premier's choice, for surely the little hills about Walton Heath are the finest piece of pleasantness within fifty miles

of London. I decided if I ever became a rich man, somewhere in this district would be my country retreat.

Enthusiastic as I was at the pleasant beauty about me, I naturally did not allow my mind to stray from the task in hand. From time to time I loitered, so that Schleicher, if he were about, should be tempted to reveal himself. Only in passing trees and hedgerows did I proceed with caution. Here a man with a revolver might be lurking—and although I wished to save Mr. Lloyd George's life, I had no desire to lose my own. Just as I had decided, in fact, that my method of approach had been wrong—that I ought to have had Marshall a hundred yards in front of me instead of loitering behind, Schleicher was upon me!

I had just passed a great tree, whose branches spread far over the path. I had deliberately wandered in my walk as I approached it, so as to be certain that no one was hiding on the farther side. I had neglected to look up above—once again under-estimating my opponent, a vital fault that I am afraid has been mine on more than one occasion. But a second after I had passed the tree I heard a thud on the ground behind me. I had only time to turn round before I found myself faced with my would-be assassin. It was obvious what had happened. He had concealed himself in the branches of the tree and jumped down immediately after I had passed.

When I thought it over afterwards I decided that his scheme was a very poor one. He would be under the impression, of course, that Mr. Lloyd George knew nothing of his projected attempt. If, therefore, he had come walking towards, or even behind his victim along the path, no notice would have been taken of him; but every one is on the *qui vive* against a man who drops unexpectedly from the branches of a tree. However, at the moment I had no time to think of this, for in a fraction of a second he sprang towards me, and I saw the flash of steel in his hand. I was rather relieved, as a matter of fact. No strength can prevail against a pistol bullet, but if he were going to attempt to stab me —well, I ought to be strong enough to deal with two Schleichers.

Again I found out my mistake. With my left hand I grabbed his right wrist and held it tightly, but he jumped in the air, swinging his other arm over my right shoulder. His legs closed about me as he kicked and fought with a strength and power which I would not have believed possible. His right wrist wriggled with such intensity that it was all I could do to keep it imprisoned. At last, however, I managed

to twist it round so sharply that he gave a cry of pain and the knife dropped from his fingers. Now, I thought, it's all over. Now I've got the little fool.

I was too previous. With a howl of rage he flung himself again upon me, clinging to me viciously with arms and legs. I tried to push him away—to get him a few inches away from me so that I could get in a good blow that would knock him out—but, however hard I struggled, I could make no headway. He clung like a leech and, rather concerned, I grappled with him, hoping that Marshall would come and tear this human limpet from me. There was no sign of Marshall. I would have been even more concerned, perhaps, had I known that in his hurry he had miscalculated the height of a stile, and caught his feet on the top rung, and had temporarily knocked himself silly.

As I looked for Marshall, I felt a sudden pain in my neck. For a moment I was too startled to realise what it meant. Then I found that the little brute had bitten me, and bitten me hard! It was not until this moment that I realised what I ought to have known before—that Schleicher was no meek and mild patriotic fool, but a madman. There was no room for doubt as he struggled and scratched. One fist pulled a handful of hair from my head—it was very fortunate that it came from the wig and not from my scalp, or it might have been very painful. The other hand, with fingers curved like claws, made a grab at my right eye; only by a withdrawal of an inch did I avoid its vicious clutch. Even then his finger-nails left deep scratches down my right cheek.

This was absurd, I decided. I was big enough to take on a man like Schleicher with one hand and, mad or no mad, I must do something desperate, or whatever reputation I ever had would completely disappear. So I left off the use of brute force for the moment and resorted to strategy. Still hugging one another like a couple of loving marmosets, I retreated a couple of yards to the tree. Propping my back against the trunk, I used an old trick which all-in wrestlers know very well. I lifted my right knee between his legs with considerable force. With a howl his grip relaxed just for a moment, and in that moment I had pushed him free and caught him a terrific upper-cut under the chin. It was the sort of blow that would have knocked out a heavyweight, and Schleicher went like a fallen tree to the ground. I took no chances, but rushed to his side. Yes, it seemed as if I had done the trick this time. Then I looked anxiously again down the path for Marshall, for certainly I would need some help. In any case, I couldn't go back to Walton

Heath a bleeding mess like this. But still there were no signs of my assistant, and I had the horrible thought that perhaps Schleicher had accomplices who had disposed of the Prime Minister's guard.

I took a step or two down the path to see if I could see anything of Marshall. It was a foolish thing to do, perhaps, although I had thought that the blow I had given Schleicher would put him to sleep for a considerable time. But suddenly again I heard movements behind me. Turning round, I saw Schleicher scrambling to his feet, and if I had any doubts before I had none now as I saw his eyes ; he was utterly and completely mad. Those eyes glaring at me were not the eyes of a man but of a beast—it is an insult to most beasts to describe them so. I went for him—I went for him hard.

I was careful not to let him get too near. I had the longer reach, and as he rushed in I gave him blow after blow. I felt his nose crush beneath one of my straight rights. Blood spurted from it and from a cut over his eye. Once I knocked him literally head over heels, but before I could get to him and sit on him he was up again, snarling like a cornered wolf. At last, flinging himself forward in a Rugby tackle, he caught me off my balance, and we went together to the ground. This, however, was his misfortune. I think I have mentioned that I am something of a heavyweight, and I came down with full force across the pit of his stomach, completely winding him. As he fought for his breath I had no mercy on him whatsoever. This was no time for Queensberry rules. He did actually struggle to his knees, both arms pressed against his tummy, the wind wheezing in his throat. But, even as he knelt, as it might be in an attitude of supplication I bent down and gave him another knock-out. This time I knew he would not rise.

A minute later I was very relieved to see Marshall running up the path. He was cursing himself for his clumsiness, which indeed might have been rather unfortunate. However, all's well that ends well, as Shakespeare said, and now our job was done. Keeping a very wary eye upon the recumbent form of Schleicher, Marshall began to give a rough dressing to my wounds. Neither of us was quite certain about those ugly bites in the neck. We knew that the bite of a mad dog is dangerous ; well, the bite of a madman might be equally so. We decided that we would carry Schleicher down to the village at once, so that my wounds could receive immediate and proper attention.

When we came to pick him up, however, I found that I had very little strength left. Whether it was due to my

apprehension about the bites, or whether the fight had taken more out of me than I knew—and I assure you that it was by no means a pleasant experience, particularly from the moment when I realised that Schleicher was a madman—but when I picked up my end of our victim I scarcely had the strength to hold him. Marshall, however, was a man of activity and in excellent training, and he got a Nelson grip of Schleicher and carried him easily, fireman fashion, over his shoulder. We made no attempt to bring him round ; he was better off for our purpose as he was.

We had covered about a quarter of a mile in this fashion, when suddenly I saw Mr. Lloyd George himself coming up the hill. Evidently he was taking his morning's constitutional a little earlier than we had anticipated. Had he come a few minutes earlier he would have had the shock of his life, for he would have met himself, bleeding from wounds in the neck and face ! As it was, there was just time to bundle Schleicher behind the hedge and for me to go with him. Marshall remained on the path. He was well-known to the Prime Minister, of course, and in case the Prime Minister should have seen some one on the path it was as well for at least one man to show up. Mr. Lloyd George walked by, throwing Marshall a cheery greeting, and stopping to talk with him for a minute or two. Then he passed on at a spanking pace, never realising what lay behind the hedge, and never realising—perhaps to this day—how near to death he had been.

Schleicher was never tried. As I had expected, he was found to be mad and unfit to plead, and was consigned to Broadmoor for the rest of his life. In order that I might have a good story to take back with me to G.H.Q. at Kreuznach, one of the leading newspapers was asked to print a small paragraph stating that the man who assaulted an army officer on the Downs near Walton Heath had been found to be mad and had been sent to Broadmoor. I took a cutting of this back with me and still have it in my possession. I would give you the actual date so that you could turn it up for yourself, but foolishly I did not keep a record and have not troubled to look it up ; but it was certainly some time in September, 1917, and the paper was the *Daily Telegraph*.

By a strange coincidence—for there are coincidences in spite of their misuse in romantic fiction—Schleicher died on the afternoon of November 11th, 1918, while great crowds of people were paying exuberant homage to the man whom he had tried to assassinate. It would be an interesting

study to trace the course of the war had Schleicher succeeded in his attempt. I do not think there is much doubt—had the war been conducted by some one less energetic than Mr. Lloyd George—it would never have ended in 1918. There is quite a possibility that when it did finish the issue might not have been quite so successful from our point of view as it was. As we have gained precious little from the actual peace, goodness knows what would have been our lot under the possible alternative!

FRANC-TIREURS

By

S. T. FELSTEAD

Of all the individual heroes who gave up their lives in this merciless campaign which went on all through the war, there was none who deserved greater credit than Oscar Hernalsteens.

His most amusing exploit took place in the big station of St. Pierre at Ghent in the middle of 1915, when a German troop train, crammed to suffocation with a brigade of men and officers en route to the Front, was waiting for the signal to leave.

Snake-like, the train coiled out of the long platform with a hissing, old-fashioned engine at its head. There were no civilians on the platform ; on such occasions it was "*verboten*" for the people of Ghent to hang about St.-Pierre. Armed guards posted at the entrances harshly forbade unauthorised entry at such important times.

Twelve or more to a carriage the men packed themselves in, their clumsy equipment made additionally cumbrous by the parcels of food they had collected in the city, filling the compartments to overflowing. It would be an uncomfortable journey, probably a matter of three hours before they reached their destination.

At the rear of the unwieldy train stood the coach reserved for the officers. By twos and threes the latter drifted into the station, the juniors leading the way, to be followed by their seniors. Most of them had been enjoying themselves ; like their men, they fully appreciated the fact that it might be their last opportunity. There was much hilarity, chatting, and exchange of jokes.

Finally the brigadier and his staff made their appearance. There was much clicking of heels and stiff salutes as the great man passed down the platform and took his seat in the compartment which had been put aside for him. The *Eisenbahn offizier* began to get busy, chivying N.C.O.'s and men back into their wooden boxes, the military police to utter words of warning to the too noisy ones.

All was ready ; nobody took the slightest notice of the man who came slinking across the lines from the blind side, a thick-set fellow with a Belgian railway porter's cap on his

head. He aimlessly stepped over the rails dimly gleaming in the subdued arc lights as though just coming on duty. He made for the rear of the train as though he intended clambering on the platform.

Suddenly he vanished from sight. Nobody saw him go, for nobody had seen him come. The sound of a whistle on the platform, followed by much laughing and shouting, denoted that the troop-train was about to move off at last. Twice the whistle blew again ; the last time it went the cumbrous engine started snorting and with innumerable groans and hisses, heaved the laden carriages behind out of the station one by one—leaving the officers' coach still standing in the station !

Yells and shouts, frantic whistling, even shots fired into the air had no effect. Serenely on its way the engine went, puffing up clouds of fiery smoke into the midnight air. Some one rushed into the office to telephone the signal-box—too late. The train had passed the signals by then. The dumbfounded Germans consulted maps and came to the conclusion that the train would be at Courtrai before they could do anything.

A raging brigadier descended from his carriage demanding the blood of the poor *Eisenbahn offizier*. The latter swore it was not his fault ; the Belgian *chef de gare* was equally emphatic that none of his staff was to blame. The brigadier, with visions of uncomfortable explanations, stamped and raved and asked how long it would be before another engine was available. Alas, there would be none until the morning. Cursing was useless ; he berated the harassed transport officer once more, and then announced that he would return to his billet until another engine could be found from somewhere.

Nobody had seen the sportsman who had pulled of this neat little *coup* ; as mysteriously as he had come to uncouple the all-important carriage, he slipped out of the station yard and was seen no more. The Germans never knew that Oscar Hernalsteens, Lone Wolf of the Secret Service, had been at work.

Sheer bad luck brought about his downfall. A message had come from Holland that he should ease up for a while : his description was now so well known that it was dangerous to venture out. Early in September, 1915, the police caught him at the café *Lion Belge* in the Chaussée de Waterloo, Brussels. He then carried a passport which was quite in order, but the Germans were not satisfied. He answered to the wanted man, and off to the Kommandantur he must go.

"Very well, then," said Oscar resignedly. "You've made a mistake, but I'll soon get that put right." So convincing was he that his captors were careless; Oscar took an opportunity to wrench himself free and ran off pursued by shouts of "Stop that thief." Unluckily a Belgian cab-driver thought fit to play policeman as well. Ignorant of the facts of the matter, he butted poor Oscar right in the stomach and lay on him until the Germans arrived. In prison they gave him a bad time. He was taken to Ghent to make him identify people alleged to be his agents, and when he refused to know any of them he had to suffer accordingly.

He was kept seven months in prison, but in spite of their efforts he still remained dumb, and after being court-martialled on April 11, 1916, he was shot at the rifle range outside Brussels eight days later. His brother George, whom he had endeavoured to shield as far as possible, escaped with a sentence of life imprisonment.

II

ANOTHER lone wolf! This time it is Pierre Jean Baptiste Poels, who started off by keeping carrier pigeons at his house in Brussels. An offence punishable with death, as he well knew. Poels, too, was somewhat old for such daring work: he had a son serving in the Belgian Army. The latter sent his father a letter telling him of certain bridges that might profitably be destroyed. Poels père, with three friends, set off on a mission of bridge destruction. The Germans felt his power at Tirlemont, Ath, Alost and Visé, and came to wonder how it was that their sentries were so frequently to be found in a state of coma, unable to explain anything beyond the fact that something had disagreed with them.

The real explanation could have been found in a chemist's shop in Brussels. Pierre Poels had a friend, Jules Vandercammen, a cigar maker by occupation. Vandercammen in his turn had a friend, an *apotheke* who listened with enthusiasm to the possibility of giving the enemy sentries cigars saturated in laudanum. Obligingly he supplied his friend with a quart or two of the drug, the latter in his turn soaking a quantity of leaf which became the filling of a number of cigars which in due course found their way into Pierre Poels' pocket.

From all over the country came stories of sentries who had been accosted by an amiable middle-aged man dressed like a mechanic. It was always the same thing: a little

harmless conversation, the offer of a cigar—much prized in those times—and a German soldier evidently unused to such strong smokes. That was not the worst, however: there was a dynamited bridge hard by, wrecked in a manner that clearly indicated the expert. So in every *polizeistelle* in Belgium there was a poster calling for the arrest of the miscreant, and offering a large reward for his apprehension.

It was the money, probably, that tempted some one to betray him. About the end of August suspicion fastened itself on a person living in a house in the Rue des Commerçants. The Germans sent along one of their "stool-pigeons," Neels-Rhode, who had already been of service to them in denouncing guides employed by Nurse Cavell's organisation.

As the son of a Belgian officer, Neels-Rhode aroused no suspicion just then. He asked about the possibility of serving his country in some form or other, and learnt enough to make him sure that Poels, the owner of the house, was engaged in dangerous work.

"You would not like what I am doing," said Poels to his caller. "I will get you over to Holland if you like; there you may make arrangements to join the Army." Neels-Rhode went off with the promise of giving the matter his consideration; what he actually did may be surmised from the fact that within twenty-four hours Poels was under arrest. As the Germans found in his house three cases of dynamite—enough to blow up an entire town, they said indignantly—a big bottle of laudanum which Vandercammen had entrusted to his care, three pistols and a box of ammunition, they were probably justified in concluding they had made a valuable capture.

Pierre paid with his life, as may be imagined. But so did the traitor; he in his turn was summarily executed by the Brussels waiter, Louis Bril, who took it upon himself to exterminate a black-hearted rascal who had sent many of his fellow-countrymen to their doom.

III

It was a real Wolf Cub who turned up in Folkestone one day in June, 1915, a bright-faced boy no more than eighteen years of age, all agog with a brilliant idea. Léon Trulin was his name. He had already been to the Belgian Consulate to enlist, and as promptly turned down when the medical officer cast an appraising eye over his frail body.

Undeterred by this rebuff, the boy called upon "Evelyn,"

the agent of the War Office, and asked him if he might be a spy.

"A spy?" inquired the Englishman amusedly. "You're a bit young for that business, my boy."

"Not at all, monsieur. I have already done enough to get shot."

"You have, eh? What is that? And where do you come from?"

"From Lille, monsieur. I took a great many photographs of the German trenches. But they saw me and I had to run away."

"Is that so?" said "Evelyn." He thought for a time and then remarked: "Well, there is nothing that I can do for you. But if you like to go along and see one of my colleagues, he may be able to make use of you. His name is Monthaye."

Monthaye had to laugh. So desperately in earnest was the youngster that he could not but listen when Léon unfolded a scheme to go back to the north of France and spy upon the German flying fields, anti-aircraft batteries, and anything else that might be around.

"Mon Dieu!" exclaimed Monthaye. "You have worked all this out. There is nothing for me to do but send you back as you desire."

Léon thought so, too. With great glee, having first been initiated into the Alpha and Omega of espionage, plus a prescription for making invisible ink out of boiled starch, he set foot in Belgium again and made his way back to Lille. Within a fortnight he was in Folkestone again, bringing with him a batch of intelligence which may, or may not, have been taken seriously. At all events, he was obviously a daring youth who might succeed where older agents would fail. His age was an asset.

Once more to Belgium, this time as a fully accredited agent. Some one drafted out a list of the things this eighteen-year-old boy was to accomplish. He was to pass the frontier and proceed to Deynze, and from there proceed to establish railway watches at various towns *en route* to the interior. Also, it was laid down that he should have the German barracks spied upon, and recruit a chain of agents which would enable his reports to arrive in Flushing in two days. Quite a considerable task!

Maybe it was Léon himself who insisted on all these details being set out. He seems to have been a business-like young man, and had it all down in black-and-white that his reports on the German barracks would be paid up to 40 francs

apiece, while every railway post he established was to be worth 100 francs—such sum, however, to be paid only when the post had been working a fortnight. His agents were to be be paid 10 francs a day and to be on duty twenty-four hours a day. It was even stipulated that he should furnish receipts for all payments, and to supply full details about his subordinates, even down to a fingerprint of their left thumb.

The probabilities are that no one took him seriously. But the boy was in deadly earnest. Smuggling himself across the frontier without much difficulty, he then set about enlisting his helpers. Here arose the first snag. The grown men he approached laughed derisively at the idea of working under the boy, and all he could do for the time being was to enlist a couple of his friends, Raymond Derain, his own age, and Marcel Gotti, who had reached the mature age of fifteen !

All three of them were sharp enough to do something. Léon went back to England with some reports in his possession, received warm commendation, and was instructed to return to Lille with the onerous job of discovering whether the old French fortifications could be repaired to join up with the new Allied line !

Did this deter him ? Not a bit of it. Back to Lille he went and first of all picked up a couple more of his friends who expressed a wish to join the band. Léon discovered that a new division of German storm troops had arrived in the neighbourhood, presumably in anticipation of the Battle of Loos. This was valuable information, worthy indeed of a Victoria Cross.

Marcel Gotti carried the reports twice a week from Lille to Tournai, where he had engaged a courier to take them to the Dutch frontier. But generally speaking, Léon was shrewd enough to look after this important end of the business himself. Once or twice more he travelled to England, until the inevitable happened.

The boy had probably never heard the old adage of taking the pitcher to the well once too often. In all likelihood, having crossed the frontier so often, he had now come under suspicion. On September 30, a week after the Battle of Loos, he left for Holland once more accompanied by his friend, Raymond Derain. Léon was carrying with him a batch of reports gathered around Lille.

The two boys had to hurry. On foot, travelling day and night, they passed through Ath, Brussels and Antwerp, feverishly anxious to cross the frontier. Something told them they were being followed.

They hurried on at a jog-trot, throwing away the sack that contained their provisions so as to lighten their load. By day, approaching any dangerous region, they hid in the woods and ate chestnuts.

At last they reached the frontier with its electrified wire and searchlights playing up and down incessantly. To get underneath the wire was troublesome as well as dangerous; it could only be done by scraping a hole with their pocket-knives deep enough to enable them to crawl underneath. At every suspicious noise they were compelled to stop and hide themselves.

Suddenly there was a sharp gleam of dazzling light; one of them had struck the wire with his knife. The German sentry only a short distance away saw it and with a hoarse "*Wer da?*" demanded who was there.

No reply. The challenge was repeated—still no answer. The crack of a rifle was heard and bullets came whistling over the spot.

Frozen stiff with fear, the two boys had remained still. When the soldiers came up at the run Raymond Derain was bayoneted in attempting to run away. Plucky little Léon's thought then was to get rid of his compromising documents. As he stood up, he threw them over the wire into Dutch territory.

Alas, it was all in vain; one of the soldiers produced a pair of rubber gloves, held the wires far apart, and thus enabled a comrade to crawl over into Holland and bring the fatal wallet back.

When morning came the two boys found themselves in the Antwerp prison. For two days they were left without food, the unfortunate young Derain suffering agony with a wound in his leg. Three days later they heard that their companions-in-arms had been arrested. These were Lucien Deswaf, Marcel Lemaire, Marcel Gotti and two other boys, one of whom was to give everything away.

They were taken to Lille to be tried, and there learnt for the first time how discovery had come about. It seems that during Léon's absence in England one of the boys had been arrested and had told the police enough to put them on his track.

What did the officers who sat on the court-martial think of these youthful desperadoes? The charges against them had been set out with true German portentousness: "Military spying, recruiting spies, carrying secret reports, etc., etc."—sufficient to condemn them a dozen times over.

On November 8, 1915, Léon Trulin was brought out for

When the soldiers came up at the run Raymond Derain was bayoneted in attempting to run away. Plucky little Léon's thought then was to get rid of the compromising documents.

execution in Lille, and died as bravely as he had lived, refusing to have his eyes bandaged.

He knew before he died that he had been betrayed. To the priest who ministered to him he said that he would extend his forgiveness to one who was weaker than himself.

Raymond Derain, sentenced to lifelong hard labour, died in a German prison. The other boys were given fifteen years each, with the exception of the one who had talked. He, the Germans in gratitude acquitted.

Some years later the French Government presented the Cross of the Legion of Honour to Léon Trulin's family.